

Raleigh Rainbows

English Key

(8th Revision)

This is an English Key for *Raleigh Rainbows*¹ written in Gregg Shorthand. The book was published in 1928 as a companion to the 1916 Gregg Shorthand Manual. Each chapter in *Raleigh Rainbows* highlights concepts learned in the same chapter in the Gregg Shorthand Manual.

Please note the following issues with the *Raleigh Rainbows* shorthand book and the unpublished Gregg Publishing Company English key:

- The vocabulary in each chapter of *Raleigh Rainbows* is limited to the Shorthand Rules introduced in the same or earlier chapters in the 1916 Gregg Shorthand Manual. However, some words and phrases are used before they were introduced in the Gregg Manual. Those are highlighted in yellow.
- This book includes some obscure words and advanced vocabulary that would have baffled students in the 1920's.
- This book has some shorthand proportion errors (e.g., "l" looks like "r").
- The book contains some obvious shorthand errors. (e.g. "super" prefix facing the wrong way.)
- There are several missing and extraneous paragraph marks and quotes.
- The only existing key from the Gregg Publishing Company is an unpublished draft. It can be found at the New York Public Library. This key was made after the shorthand plates were created because there are editor's marks indicating shorthand page breaks. It has text that was handwritten after the key was typed. The Gregg key contains many mistakes, including words and sentences that are not in the shorthand book. There are also hundreds of contractions (e.g., didn't). But the majority of these contractions are not indicated in the shorthand book with a contraction mark over the shorthand phrase. For the purposes of this document, we have tried to stick to what is in the shorthand text when it differs from the unpublished Gregg key.

Please note the following regarding the conventions of this document:

- Words that were omitted and should obviously be included are shown in []. There are two categories of omitted words: (1) Words that were intentionally omitted because they can be inferred from the context (e.g. [a], [to]) and (2) Words that were omitted in error, but should obviously be included (e.g., [thing]).
- Breaks between pages in the *Raleigh Rainbows* shorthand book are indicated in footnotes. There are no footnotes for page breaks before a new shorthand chapter.

¹ This book entered the public domain in 1957 because it was not renewed with the U.S. Copyright Office in 1956. During that period of time, books had to be renewed during the 28th year after original publication to avoid entering into the public domain at the end of the 28th year.

Chapter 1 (Page 1 in *Raleigh Rainbows* book)

Dick Keene read: dark, ago, day, hat, miller, it, in.

Amy Decker: need, array, clean, drama, amid, well, at, would, not, I am.

Clay Emmet:² nickel, regain, limit, greet, enemy, not, I would not, he can.

Helena Reed: needle, rail, tag, gear, make, go, an, I cannot, in the.

Dean Ellery: keen, lack, middle, green, treat, can, will, I, he would not, at the, he will.

Natalie Gray: train, malady, etiquette, dilemma, technique, good, the, are, he cannot, it will.

Henry Gray: trickery, reckon, narrate, granite, medal, legatee, would, hour, am, he will not, can the, in our.

Nan Hill: dream, mark, aim, drill, more, I can, I would, I will.

² In the English Introductory text, Clay's last name is "Emmet" on Page v and "Emmett" on Page vii. We will use "Emmet" for consistency throughout this translation.

Chapter 2 (pp 2-3)

"Hear Nan. She can read. She can preach from every page," laughed Henry Gray, for Nan can read in a keen, sharp flash, which would be apt for a grave, but able veteran.

"I cannot teach, but I shall not preach," Nan pledged in reply. "I shall be happy after I can feel ready for any page. I mean, before I can teach, I shall need drill."

"Here, here!" flashed Dick Keene.

"It would sharpen the ear," came from Henry Gray.

"I believe a little drill would be for our good," alleged Helena Reed. "I will read a little; take it please."³

She read: put, been, but, have, change, about, ever, name, give, gave, let, market, represent, check, teach, please, which, behalf, believe, little, abate, agile, appliqué, break, banish, blacken, baffle, clash, clipped, dredge, frigid, fragile, fatty, free, fringe, lavish, hitched, happy, elfish, flinch, peal,⁴ plaid, penal, shrill, sharpen, banana, affair,⁵ velvety, vanish, triple, prepay, veteran, fatigue, catalpa, chenille, checker, freshet, chain, fiddle, giraffe, hatchet, fairy, chamois⁶, flag, flame, chinchilla, creeper, peevish, napkin, paddle, pallet, vain, vagary, panic, planet, sheriff, shale, trench, valley, villain, taffy, radish, kitchen, hinge, pledge, Brady, Alfred, Dave, Fanny, prattle, pinch, dash, drape, apple, appeal, bracket, brain, bead, beef, bench.

³ She is indicating that they should write these words in Shorthand as she reads them.

⁴ Break between Pages 2 & 3.

⁵ Written "A-F-A-R." Should be "A-F-R" per 1916 Gregg Shorthand Dictionary.

⁶ "Chamois" is pronounced "shammy."

Chapter 3 (pp 4-6)

"I own I am not agile; far from it," chafed Henry Gray, "for I cannot get half of it."

"Nor can I," came from Natalie.

"I believe I caught most of it—at least I hope I have," from Amy Decker.

"I am mad. I know every form, but I cannot hurry. Let a fellow have a peep at the page, Helena," laughed Clay Emmet.

"I am the blockhead, lame in the ear," mocked Dean Ellery, the rouge. "Let me borrow the page for an hour."

"I have a botch; I balked in the middle," Nan told him.

"I have it all," bragged Dick Keene.

"Read it!" an edict from Nan. "But please, Nellie,⁷ on behalf of all here, keep the role of coach. Follow Dick on the page."

All echoed the appeal.

Dick read from the paper before him. Helena marked every flaw. Dick had a⁸ ready knack, but he had not shirked any care which would give him technique. He had read alone at home beyond the given page, had caught the shape of each odd mark before he wrote it at all. On the whole, he felt he had no need of chagrin.

"Good. I am glad for Dick!" came from Helena, the calm, grave judge. "He may bear off the palm."⁹ She gave him a friendly nod.

"A medal for Dick!" pledged Amy Decker.

"Or a neat, polished nickel for a goal," laughed merry Nan, not a shade abashed. She hoped he would not brag anymore. Dick had a keen, sharp brain, but she had a real fear he would be a little vain of any honor he might achieve. Nan alleged it a blemish, which she would have abolished. She flashed Natalie a droll, elfish grin.

Helena brought the talk back; she had tact galore. "I will show drill in Gregg, jolly for everybody in our company. I should regard it more," she alleged in amity. "I shall keep at¹⁰ it, for a lot of it will help me."

"'Drill' shall be our motto," echoed Henry Gray. "I favor a half hour each day."

"A dreary plot," a moan from Dean.

"I know a jollier trick," Nan told him. "Let me take the helm!"

⁷ "Nellie" is a nickname for "Helena." Nan calls her "Nell" on Page x in the English introduction.

⁸ Break between Pages 4 & 5.

⁹ "Bear off the palm" means win or take the prize.

¹⁰ Break between Pages 5 & 6.

"Surely! We aim to please you," laughed Dean Ellery. "Go on; publish your plot."

"I hope you have not any gloomy dream of more work for me!" came a moan from Clay Emmet.

"Hush your prattle. We await the good uplift from Nan," Dean told him. "It will not addle your brain, Clay. Anna,¹¹ we will hear from you."

"Ahem!" A mock cough from Clay in reply.

"Do get ahead," from Dick Keene.

But Nan would not hurry, nor could she regard the whole affair in any narrow way. Merry, happy Nan, ready for joke or frolic, felt a real hope to achieve in whatever domain she delved.

"Do you ever feel a little vague about it all, Nan?" Amy Decker broached a fresh dilemma. "What we will work for?—What we have to win? You keep plucky sure before the world. You know I am brought to book¹² for any daydream I am known to have."

"I will awaken you; I will keep you awake!" came a chuckle from Nan. "Yes, I own I have felt dreamy, even dull, dreary, not to omit wishy-washy."

"I am bound to believe you, but I cannot feel bound to harken **to any** more twaddle from you, Anna Jerome¹³ Hill," Helena told Nan. "You have not talked yet on the jolly trick you can donate in our favor. Keep on the trail!"

"Do narrate the tale," came from Clay.

"Or your great trick will fail!" echoed Dean.

"Wait. I can make one, too," from Amy. "When your abode would be in jail!"

"You should fish or cut bait, Nan," laughed Dick Keene. "Do you fear to catch a whale?"

The little¹⁴ raillery¹⁵ brought a laugh, for Dick had a friendly watchman on the wharf, whom he took for a model when he talked.

"Be calm. You shall hear what I have to narrate," Nan pledged. "But we cannot make much headway before we each talk a little about whatever we deem our goal. We represent Raleigh Ridge here.¹⁶ I, for one, believe we ought do what we can to honor it. All in favor, show it in the well-known way."

¹¹ "Anna" is Nan's formal name. "Nan" is her nickname.

¹² "Brought to book" is old slang for "called to account" or "called to justice." Break between Pages 7 & 8.

¹³ Anna's middle name is actually written as "Jerome."

¹⁴ "Little" is written like "return," but the unpublished Gregg key says "little."

¹⁵ "Raillery" means "teasing."

¹⁶ Break between Pages 8 & 9.

Clay launched the quick reply, "Yes!" All felt the lure of the little hamlet of Raleigh Ridge, for each felt he or she ought do what would avail **to make** the most of the home group. Not an odd one in the little company!

Nan regards closely the group of friends who are **to make** up a world of their own in the Business course at Rex College. The colony at Raleigh Ridge is not great in numbers, but there is a feeling that they are all friends. They may vary in the riches of this world, in the fashion in which they gain wealth, but they all think as one in this: They believe in the exalting of the Ridge above other hamlets in every way. They give unremitting¹⁷ care, faring happily in such blessings as good roads, a neat public park, cozy homes having green lawns, also a brave array of blossoms.

The home of the Grays has, in some unforeseen way, become a rallying spot for those friends Nan sees before her. In this very place, there is a seat for this tall Helena, for that little Amy Decker, for frail Natalie, for chubby Clay—seats shabby from much kicking of male shoes or from hauling about for anything from ships at sea to trains coursing from Geneva to¹⁸ **Italy** when they all played here as little ones. Nan has led their merry frolics; she knows each one of them. She is thinking of the way of appealing to them in behalf of an unpleasant cause, also alluding to the amazing, but most pleasing scheme.

"I hope we can show zealous teamwork the ensuing weeks," she pleads. "A great sensation hangs on our doing so."

What is the scheme you have in the back of your head, Nan?" Helena is quick to ask. "You must take compassion on us. Relieve our complex state of questioning by a conscientious reply, or you will get put off this team in just about two shakes!"

"I am thinking up a subtle way to put it to you!" laughs Nan. "Being the one audacious villain in this convention, I have a piece of villainy to confess. You all know Deacon Nathan Tenney, who alludes **to me** as 'niece Ann' when he is not calling me a 'saucy shrimp,' a name in which he embodies an unbecoming notion to enforce training in the crude, but early mode by laying on the birch! Only his great sense of equity or the insight **to know** that I would be talking anyway, whatever he was doing, has ever saved me.

"No Deacon can save you if you keep¹⁹ whetting our longing for your story, but not appeasing it," calls Dick, who hopes to catch Nan napping.

But Nan adds readily: "I have balm for these unseemly feelings of which you complain, Dick, if you have ears to hear."

"We have ears, but we have a mob impulse **to expel** you from this session **of the** senate," mocks Clay. "In one breath, Nan, if you can! Make it brief, lady!"

"Booty!" Nan is brisk to commence. "Rich booty!"

"Not from Deacon Tenney!" vetoes Dick tersely. "Do you know anymore jokes?"

¹⁷ "Unremitting" in this instance means "undiminished."

¹⁸ Break between Pages 10 & 11.

¹⁹ Break between Pages 11 & 12.

"If you please, the meeting will now begin," said Nan in a quiet voice. "You appoint me mouthpiece for the Deacon; you are trying to find out all about it, but it does annoy me when you heckle me while I am trying to talk!"

"I wish you could talk about prize money, **instead** of the Deacon—if that is what you mean by **booty**," cries Dick.

"It is not cash, to be true," Nan said. "Why, Dick, how could you guess?"

"It was only a guess," sighs Dick. "But if it is not cash, is it a toy?"

"It will not **likely** be anything to arouse shouts of joy or create riotous living," spouts Dean. "Deacon radiates the solemn, doughy foods of life; but ice cream or pie or anything choice or spicy is poison to that pious boy!"²⁰

"Whew, Dean, you are a cute orator when you are roused—how you pile it on!" said Henry.

"Quite unfair, too," Dick avowed.

"I invite everyone to try to keep quiet while Nan makes her speech,"²¹ chides Helena in an icy voice that does not hide her annoyance.

"We were speaking of our trying to work in peace, having²² a view to talking about our plans, our thoughts, in a friendly way," Nan began again. "Anyway, that is what I have had in mind ever since we began the course. I'll own I might have taken it more lightly if it had not been for Uncle Nathan. To quiet my conscience, I'll own up now right here that **I do not usually** speak as kindly as I should about the Deacon. I know we all ought to revere grey hairs."

"I will on the man that raised 'em—Deacon wears a toupee," vows the doughty²³ Clay, making [a] wry face.

Nan shook her curly locks. "I revere Uncle Nathan surely because I know he made his own way in life from a poor boy having no chance whatever **in the world**, you'd have said; yet he is **one of the** men who guide²⁴ the affairs of our little city. I know it seems odd, but I believe that it was not easy to toil as he **toiled** in his youth; to face privations so he could go to school; he has gone barefoot, too, to save his shoes just as we read about. You malign him when you imply he's a miser, but if cash means more to him than it²⁵ does to us, it is because he knows what it is to have to get along on [a] little."

"He has a fine ally in you, Nan," shy Amy said quickly.

"Cash sure means a pile to most folks," vows Dick scowling.

²⁰ Why do they refer to Deacon as a boy!?

²¹ Break between Pages 13 & 14.

²² "Having" is missing the dot for "ing."

²³ "Doughty" is an archaic word for brave and persistent.

²⁴ Bad grammar. This should be "guides."

²⁵ Break between Pages 14 & 15.

"Believe me, it does to us when we think how Dad **has** to stretch his **to make** it do," sighs Dean, who is one of a good-sized family.

"I guess that none of us are above it," joins in Henry Gray in his genial way. "Is Deacon Tenney going to create an annuity for us, Nancy?"²⁶

"We had a long talk," Nan said. "I think it is the only talk we have ever had when Uncle Nathan made me feel as though I might be more than a kid. I like it. You know he has lived in Raleigh Ridge so long that he is eager for us to be an honor to the place. His plan is unique—utopian. Briefly, he plans for a choice prize to be given one of us a year from our graduation."

"Oh, joy!" "What for?" "How much?" "Whatever in the world!" chimes in one after another. "He thinks you will get it, Nan; he's your uncle," pouts one. "What's the idea," mused another.

"Hush!" shouts Nan. "What a noise! Why there are [a] few conditions, but if you will allow me, I will outline his plan."

²⁶ Nan's formal name is "Anna." So why are they calling her "Nancy" here?

"As senior member of this meeting, I am chief," said Helena Reed. "Any contention or threatened mutiny shall find me adamant. Nan has the floor, and I intend to demand a fine from everyone who does not give her undivided attention."

"The prize," Nan began promptly, "is a week in Washington. All the site-seeing wanted and all expenses defrayed."

She paused suddenly and looked at the astonished faces about her. Amy Decker had opened her blue eyes to their full extent, and her mouth was open, too, but she made no pretense of speaking. From Henry Gray, emitted a sibilant²⁷ breath of astonishment.

Dick Keene, his face between his hands, attentive to what Nan was saying, had puckered his lips to a whistle. His face was very red; his gaze ostentatiously fixed upon the other side of the room, but he remained silent. Dean and Clay were seated side by side²⁸ upon the roomy, leather couch, each having one hand behind him, the other cupped²⁹ at his ear in the pose of a very deaf man. At Nan's scrutiny, they changed hands, moving in unison and gazed steadily back at her. Even Helena, the unbending, had to laugh, and Nan's good nature was readily restored.

"I planned to give you all the definite information I have," she said. "What do you want to know?"

"Who is going to chaperone?" ventured the dainty Amy in a demur voice.

"It is a dandy scheme, and there is some sense in devotion to the Demon Work in the very thought of it," avowed Dean, while his echo Clay maintained in immense optimism that he had a premonition of their all turning to skeletons in their tendency to strain the minimum of talent that was in them!

"When is he going? I hope it will be in the spring time," added Henry.

"How did he ever think of it? The trip I've wanted intensely to take!"

Nan smiled at the last sentence. It came from Natalie Gray. Uncle Nathan had named a prize they all wanted to obtain.

To Natalie and Henry, money meant little, but their parents were a quiet, stay-at-home pair, seldom traveling, and didn't know how much³⁰ Natalie and Henry longed to see a little more of the world. Clay Emmet was the only one of the others whose finances might not have hindered him from taking such a trip at his own expense, but Emmet, Sr., did not believe in giving boys much spending money. Mr. Emmet and Clay lived alone in the most beautiful

²⁷ "Sibilant" means "hissing sound." Written S-E-B-L-NT, but should be S-E-B-E-L-NT per 1916 Gregg Shorthand Dictionary.

²⁸ The concept of omitting "by" between repeated words (e.g. "side by side") is not introduced until Lesson 11 of the 1916 Gregg Shorthand Manual. That rule states that the second occurrence of the word should be close to and slightly lower than the first. "Side by side" is written incorrectly on this page. The second occurrence of "side" is level to the first. Technically, that would be "side after side."

²⁹ Break between Pages 16 & 17.

³⁰ Break between Pages 17 & 18.

residence in Raleigh Ridge, but that didn't prevent Clay and Dean remaining intimate friends, though in Dean's crowded home, the boys were denied the use of their own rooms.

Helena Reed, who was Natalie's cousin, had spent a winter in Washington, but perhaps for that very reason, was devoutly hoping she might have been the one to spend the week there. As for Nan, her eyes danced, and it was difficult for her to retain her decorum.

"Aunt Freedom is going," she amended, at which faces brightened yet more. Aunt Freedom, who was the Deacon's twin and kept his home for him, was an honor to her name, Dean and Clay maintained. Her gentle wisdom and optimism helped many times to brighten the skies for homesick boys and girls at the Ridge. She was "Aunt" to all of them and was believed to follow Deacon Tenney and his birch stick, giving the culprit red cinnamon drops to soothe his wounded feelings.

"One little detail³¹ you haven't mentioned," demurred Dick. "What's it for, anyhow? I think we ought to know what the prize is for. Give me a hint."

"We'll know in due time," said Nan. "He wants us all to make an attempt to win and to have an equal chance, but I do not know what to do for it now any more than you do. He has only one favor to ask. I was to meet you all and attempt to find, or rather ask you—what your chief aim is. What do you aim to be or where do you want to be a year from now?"

"In Washington!" shouted Dean and Clay as one man.

³¹ Break between Pages 18 & 19.

All laughed heartily, but the alert Dick Keene, who dared to ask: "Do you assert that Deacon Tenney means to offer a prize and not allow us to know how to earn it? How absurd! I never heard of such an ordeal. What a domineering creature he would be!"

"A sort of Spartan strain in his organism," Henry surmised. "At worst, it is flattering to hear he is at all concerned in fostering our feeble germs of success."

"Oh, he'd endorse anything appertaining to hard work," blustered Dick. "This time, he is surpassing his endeavors by leaving out all pertinent details—to make it harder!"

"Any perverse **idea of the Deacon's** which spurs us on to exertion will do us a service. Only some unforeseen occurrence shall divert me from my yearning for that week in **Washington!**" Henry made the assertion heartily.

"Your ardor almost converts me; if I could only surmount my tormenting diffidence," Amy murmured nervously.

"Me, too." Natalie emerged from her absorption in thought. "My hopes are shattered if brains and daring³² are largely concerned in the case."

"What enthusiasm I have aroused!" Nan laughed. "I asked Uncle Nat many questions, but he **objected** firmly to giving me any details. We are to write out our most ardent hopes, each to be secret from the others, and I am to guard them until I surrender them to him."

"A year from the date of our graduation, we shall have a circle meeting at which he wishes to preside. Not until then, shall we ascertain what the prize is for."

"Rather a large order to burden one," muttered the perverse Dick.

"Pardon me, but we have not been left wholly in the dark," argued Helena. "We have one plain hint to work upon. No harm can be done if we each decide upon our aim in life and work toward it for a year. The one who most nearly attains it will merit the prize and certainly be the winner. I trust we shall learn many things from the mere attempt to surpass the others of our circle."

"Hearty cheers for you, Sherlock," murmured Clay, the large-hearted.

"Still, it wouldn't be anything very startling if we could reach our goal in a year," blurted out Dick.

"I should say not. Imagine now that I wanted to be **President of the United States**," smiled Henry Gray. "They wouldn't look at me until I was 35."

"I'll warrant Dick wouldn't want to be President; there have been 30³³ of them now," asserted the impertinent Dean.

"I would rather be right than be President," said Clay in a tormenting way.

³² Break between Pages 20 & 21.

³³ Break between Pages 21 & 22.

"You'll never be either," retorted Dick warmly.

"Order! Order! I never heard such a chatter!" Helena hammered the arm of her chair sternly. "Pass the cards and pencils, Henry, and get my disorderly crew at the hard task before us. It takes all my time to keep this circle harmonious."

"Try to convert these war-like soldiers into an organization noted for its harmony, and I shall be glad [to] assist you," said Henry. He rose from his armchair and started towards the ornate wardrobe in which he and his sister Natalie had learned to keep their toys when they were mere urchins, but which now served as a sort of store place for odds and ends. In this crisis, he brought out writing **materials**, which he passed in a courteous manner.

There was a world of meaning³⁴ in the way the **members of the octette** received the bits of pasteboard. Dick nodded curtly as he plainly wracked his brain for a smart wording for his wish. Nan and Natalie received their cards quietly, but Helena gave Henry a reassuring smile as she fingered hers. Dean and Clay were more concerned about their frolicking.³⁵ It was Amy Decker, usually so hesitant and undecided, nervously afraid of venturing upon new and difficult territory, who first began to write. She had one firm determination, and it was but the work of a minute to write it.

³⁴ "Meaning" looks like "manning" written M-A-N-ING. It should be M-E-N-ING.

³⁵ Break between Pages 22 & 23.

"Hurrah! Amy's card is the first one received!" said Nan; for Amy had written half a dozen words without pausing and handed her card to Nan.

No one seemed to follow her action. Even Henry lacked his usual calm poise and was toying with his silver pencil while the others were in different poses of despair and uncertainty.

Nan was glad to commend Amy by some reference to the acceptance of her card and to call attention to her little victory, for Amy lacked assurance and was a girl who needed drawing out and a **great deal** of sympathy from her friends.

Nan's was the stronger character; perhaps because of that, she always showed consideration for Amy and a thorough belief in her power to do things.

"I shall enclose my card in a letter and hand it to you, Nan, as agent to deliver whenever you consider best." Henry next began to speak. "I cannot duplicate Amy's quick draft. I must respectfully beg for more time."

"Small wonder it's beyond the rest of us³⁶ then," Dick groaned.

"I am surprised to find that after all, I do not know what the aim really is to which I should like to devote my life," acknowledged Nan unhappily. "I could write it easily enough, if I only knew **what to write**. It's my own fault for not taking stock of my principles **long ago**."

"Oh, write something, and let's go outdoors," Clay told them wearily.

"I can't think clearly or without difficulty in this society,"³⁷ Dick agreed. "It's an absorbing business when we care so much about the importance of recording the truth in our reports. I suggest that we all go out and get some fresh air. Maybe we'll collect some new ideas."

"Any particular advantage in satisfying the Deacon's morbid determination to know the worst today?" asked Henry significantly.

"Not as he represented it to me," she replied. "But none of us will ever lose favor or influence with Uncle Nathan by being prompt and by showing that we are absorbing some of his public spirit. He is something of a martinet, but—there it is! Do any of you want a week in **Washington**?"

"Can a kitten lap cream?" laughed Clay. "All that worries me is to be able [to] bring out something that will make the Deacon think I am a wise owl and³⁸ yet something not impossible for my commonplace qualities to put into effect when I get out into the world. It's easy to be alert in a common sort of way, but when you try to make it definite—"

"Help me carry him out, Clay!" Dick dared his fellow, and a lively scuffle ensued, the three lads having wracked their brains with weighty thoughts until nature protested.

"I believe fresh air will not hurt any of us," was Helena's suggestion.

³⁶ Break between Pages 24 & 25.

³⁷ In this context, "society" means "group setting."

³⁸ Break between Pages 25 & 26.

"But we have not finished with our cards yet!" Nan regarded her with alarm.

"We can come back to them again," Helena suggested. "I cannot endure such a hazardous piece of work just now if my very existence depends upon it! A week in **Washington**! And how we reply to the Deacon's question is to determine our fate! It's an ordeal I must be allowed to work out to my full satisfaction where there is nothing to divert my attention."

"Why there is surely time enough. It can't do any harm to wait one day in order [to] ensure a satisfactory showing," Natalie gladly agree with her. "Come, Nan, do not be too hard on us. This is important and of some significance. We all want more time."

"I talked with him yesterday, and you must trust my word that he is a man who cannot see any³⁹ occasion for delay, so let that govern you somewhat," Nan returned. "**In my opinion**, it would be better to appear alert and to try to arrange something between now and tomorrow."

"That's a capital idea; we shall have time to think about it during the evening, and we can then remit to Nan as clerk by tomorrow," added Natalie.

"A most wise arrangement, since it ought to end in the improvement of our copies," said Helena, raising a much-rubbed card above her head. "I'll send mine in a letter."

"And meantime, let's forget them," charged Dean. "I am obliged to have a change of air this instant to assist me in getting acquainted with Dean Ellery and his strange aims. It will be some experience, I acknowledge."

"Never mind; all the rest of us know you well enough, to our regret," stated Clay, dodging to avoid a sofa pillow aimed directly at his head.

"Do wait until we get **out of the** house before you begin to do each other bodily harm; then it won't make so much difference," laughed Helena.

"Did you see? He missed me by an inch margin," jeered Clay. "Come on out! Let's not devote any more time to orations."

Dean and Clay, having given each other a friendly thrust or two, linked arms and marched to the door, not heeding Dick,⁴⁰ who tried to retard their going; and the others, with one accord, followed chatting lightly. **In the course** of a few minutes, the living room was deserted, and only the furniture left to have a sort of witches' holiday, for it had been sadly disarranged by the lively, young company.

No one would set it to rights until Henry and Natalie returned. The big room had its weekly cleaning, but to Natalie, the young **daughter of the house**, fell the duty of keeping it dusted and everything in order. She was a girl of more strength of character than her gentle ways would cause one to judge and had a talent for home-making in all that the word implies; to her industry and unerring sense of values, the Grays owed the surpassing charm of their home, which somehow gave a suggestion of beauty and cheer, in **spite of the big** high-ceilinged rooms and the lack of expensive furnishings. To Natalie also belonged the credit for the books, flowers, and growing things that filled odd corners or helped conceal well-

³⁹ Break between Pages 26 & 27.

⁴⁰ Break between Pages 27 & 28.

worn furniture and window sills. It was fall now, and there were autumn leaves in the big vase by the chimney and a bowl of gay asters on the desk between the long windows. Out of doors, the air was clear and bracing, but unusually cool for the season.

Soon shouts⁴¹ and bursts of laughter gave significant proof that the change of air had turned their immediate thoughts from future occupations to the satisfactory business of a thoroughly good time.

⁴¹ Break between Pages 28 & 29.

By the first day of October, the eight students from Raleigh Ridge could consider that all preliminary work was ended, and they were thoroughly established in the customary work of a commercial school, pleasantly familiar with their surroundings, and sufficiently popular to make possible a cheery cooperation with their associates and teachers.

Outside their own small numbers, the capable Natalie was a general favorite with all because of her pleasant ways and her loyalty to her friends, while Nan and Helena were respected for their diligence and fine showing in class standing. Amy Decker, the youngest, was unanimously voted a dear.

Among the boys, Dean and Clay became prominent before a week had ended for their aptitude for mischief and irresistible fun-making and also for their sterling qualities. Henry Gray, notwithstanding his quiet deliberation of speech and unassuming manner, became [a] dominant factor in all school affairs with Dick as right-hand man and general factotum. Dick was [a] worker and possibly had the most enthusiasm of the eight by nature; to his credit, he was peculiarly alive⁴² to his own limitations and not too proud to learn from his friend, who was more favored certainly in a pecuniary sense. The Grays were but moderately well off, but without any love of display or claim to the Society, which is spelled with a capital letter; they always gave the impression of ease and culture. Dick Keene was obviously poor, though he felt that poverty was no disgrace. Dick would derive permanent benefit from even a brief experience in traveling. If success depended upon conquering every difficulty between his own incompetence and the desired end, he felt he must not relinquish his efforts for the opportunity might never occur again.

By common though unspoken consent among the eight to whom Deacon Tenney had addressed his pleasing offer, no mention was made of it among the privileged ones in the presence of outsiders. Even Nan, outspoken and candid by nature, had a business-like attitude in those matters she believed should be kept private. She appreciated the clever means by which Uncle Nat had aroused enthusiasm among them as a natural consequence of his offer and had given them an incentive to clear, precise thinking.

Like Amy, Nan had occasional misgivings as to her own aptitude for a commercial course. She was not prejudiced against a business⁴³ life, yet it was necessary for her to do some serious thinking before committing anything to paper. She was a bright girl, but like others of her age, the work to which she looked forward and in which she was accustomed to represent her life innocently enough as a brilliant success was frankly indefinite in its nature. She deliberated scrupulously, but she knew Uncle Nat should receive her card simultaneously with the others. Consequently, she gave a sigh of relief as she carried them all to his office as directed, and now her thoughts were of schoolwork. Besides her gratitude to Uncle Nat, her natural love of success made her determined to win the approval of her teachers.

On a certain Saturday afternoon, school being through for the week, Nan had agreed to be ready at 3:00 to celebrate their freedom by a long walk into the outlying country in the fine autumn weather that they might enjoy the brilliant foliage of trees and shrubs.

Raleigh Ridge is only a little hamlet of a few hundred, which somehow outgrew the city

⁴² Break between Pages 30 & 31.

⁴³ Break between Pages 31 & 32.

boundary; it is separated from it by a small reservation known as Raleigh Park. Once outside the growth of trees and shrubbery, which indicates the park enclosure, the land rises easily to the moderate elevation that is called⁴⁴ Raleigh Ridge. Beyond this, there is a well-nigh⁴⁵ perpendicular slope to the top of Raleigh Heights.

Nan's home was on the outskirts of the Ridge. The Grays had arranged to call for her as they had frequently heretofore, and the three friends together would abandon the regular road and follow one of the numerous trails to the top.

Nan waited impatiently for some time and was wondering if they had failed to remember their promise. She finally decided to set out alone and was putting on her wraps when a familiar shout was heard outside. She hurried to the door to find her friends had arrived.

"Cancel all dates and join us!" they cried simultaneously.

"I apologize for the outrageous neglect you have been called upon to endure," began Henry Gray in an eloquent style. "I had to wait for Natalie to powder her nose—a final long, splendid powdering. I remonstrated, but it was of no use; and while I was waiting, the rest of these children came along, so here we all are, the entire crowd, not one absent.

"Observe, the innocent-appearing youth on your left; he has a pound or so of bacon purloined from his parents' well-stocked storeroom—I say 'well-stocked,' but I doubt it. There are other young ruffians in his family, and if they all experience the vulgar appetite⁴⁶ of our friend before you and duplicate the enthusiasm with which he has invaded the larder on this and similar occasions—

"However, let that pass. His eminent rival on your right is endangering our lives by a lengthy knife, which he handles adroitly and claims is adequate for cutting said bacon into delicate slices. He balances this demonstration of hardware in the other hand by several wooden sticks, pointed for spearing and toasting said bacon. From my own knowledge gained through past experience, it is obvious that said sticks will not be sharp enough to go through ordinary raw bacon; wherefore I beg the privilege of asking Miss Hill to collect sufficient forks or iron skewers or something that we can tie to the ends of our sticks, both to hold the bacon and to endure the heat better than wood."

"Better than wood would," corrected Dean, waiving a singular-looking bundle.

"To be sure," Nan answered Henry. "I'll be delighted to go on a bacon-bat,⁴⁷ but why didn't you let me know beforehand? I should have prepared something rather more wholesome than iron spikes."

"Remember, this affair was arranged on the spur of the moment absolutely," Natalie hastened to assure her. "Dean is really the instigator because he appeared first with a whole strip of bacon."

"Which he earned by the sweat of his⁴⁸ brow waiting on customers for Mr. Elliott, the

⁴⁴ Break between Pages 32 & 33.

⁴⁵ "Well-nigh" means "very nearly."

⁴⁶ Break between Pages 33 & 34.

⁴⁷ "Bacon-bat" is a festive outdoor party, featuring bacon and other treats.

⁴⁸ Break between Pages 34 & 35.

grocer, while he attended to other financial matters," Dean amended. "I wanted [to] negotiate for 3 pounds, but he wouldn't let me have more than 2, and I sold \$6 worth for him, too. I think I was entitled to more."

"I estimate his profit to be 50¢, and the bacon is worth 80¢—I am glad you are not working for my father," said Clay with some degree of warmth.

"That's all I know about it," Dean retorted. "I happen to know there was originally a 15% profit on a bushel of—well **one of the** things I sold. I can calculate discounts, too, but I am not at liberty to give away the local union prices. Whenever everybody is pleased, let's go."

"There's freight enough for everyone," reported Helena. "Nan, be sure to bring that magazine with the temperance story. Someone can read it while the balance of us are getting supper. I prefer to read, if you please. We are all here and accounted for; now let's save time by travelling along."

No one objected, and by twos, like the animals in the Ark, Dick observed, the spirited eight moved up hill.

As they left the village street, they saw a man in somewhat dilapidated clothing, yet scrupulously neat, whom the local papers had reported to be involved in business difficulties for a very long time. Most people gave him credit for strict honesty, and his melancholy aspect gave him proof of day after day of grief and worry for the welfare of his employees, who would share his misfortune.

"I don't believe poor Mr. Oliver will be able to hold up his head if the firm really fails," said Nan soberly. "The new policy, which he inaugurated, has proved anything but a success, and there is a chance that the factory will be closed. At least the whole form of government will have to be changed. I do not know the details of the work as he planned it, but I know the credit of the firm is somehow in question, and they have told him that if they reorganize, it will be without him—he will have to withdraw. He was always so proud of the **old** name Blair and Oliver, and there isn't a better-meaning man in Raleigh Ridge."

"He is one of the best; it will be a legal failure, not a moral⁴⁹ one," Henry mused aloud.

"What happened?" asked little Amy.

"I never could quite comprehend Mr. Blair," Nan continued. "As for details of the business, Amy: Mr. Oliver acted for the good of all his working force; if he failed, it was only because those he trusted went behind his back and either misrepresented things or else did not act in accordance with the advertised policy of the organization. I was very glad when he was made an equal partner, and I am sorry to learn of his disappointment. He ought to have succeeded, but in the course of business, many things are to be taken into account."

"He might be a man of fine qualities, and yet not good as an organizer," ventured Dick. "It seems to me some men are better off working for a corporation."

"I hate the thoughts [sic] of working for anybody for any length of time. I want to make my own way and have an office of my own," said Clay. "Nobody can dictate to me year after year."

"Not even hour after hour. You didn't know enough of your lesson to last you 15 minutes in class this morning," laughed Dean.

"I would have been able [to] get more, if they'd use easy language," Clay affirmed. "If they would only stick to the good old business phrases: 'In regard to the matter,' 'in reference to those,' 'in reply to your letter of the 4th,' 'we are in receipt of your letter,' 'at an early date.'"

"Or:⁵⁰ 'I am in receipt of your letter,' 'to which your letter refers,' 'in answer to your letter,' 'in reference to this matter,' 'we are in the market,'" added Dean. "I am sure there will be a large number of these stock phrases in all my letters, some of them more or less misused to be sure, but think of the saving of time and thought! They will make my office the most popular in the city!"

"I wish our teacher would follow your example," sighed Clay, "instead of annoying our ears with a whole alphabet at a time and our eyes and hands with such outlines as she does. My

⁴⁹ Break between Pages 36 & 37.

⁵⁰ Break between Pages 37 & 38.

so-called mind is only medium grade, and it seems to be fatigued by the end of the week, and I do not want words of more than four syllables thrown at it."

"Is that why you want [to] go in business alone, so you can use simple language because you haven't much knowledge of the other kind?" asked Nan. "Put that on your memorandum for Uncle Nat!"

"Fine! If they hadn't been handed to him several weeks ago; you know you charged us eloquently not to delay with those cards," replied Clay.

"My ambitions change from time to time," Dick acknowledged. "It may be ridiculous, but they do. One thing I have to say: I am sure the way to wealth is to work for a man who already possesses it. Not that I want [to] take it from him, you know, but I believe in learning by association. I would like [to] ride to **Washington** in my own car one of these days."

"You should have told that to Uncle Nat," repeated⁵¹ Nan. "Instead of having nothing to put on our cards, most of us had enough to make a fair-sized pamphlet! By the way—," Nan paused.

They were now half-way up the steep slope, and her keen brown eyes, glancing idly at the trail from time to time, had been conscious of a big, luxurious automobile climbing the broad road from the Ridge below her. The land was an easy grade there, but what caught her attention was the fact that now at the instant she looked, the car was leaving the main avenue and turning into the one available cart path to the top of Raleigh Heights. The eight friends on their walking tours habitually avoided this path, as there was a rank growth of trees and wild shrubbery on both sides that made it dangerous for pedestrians, in case a machine came up behind them. Its rough pebbles and irregular surfaces, purposely left that way for the better grip of tires or wagon wheels, made it less pleasant, too, for walking than the little footpaths. The road was used mostly for carting wood in the winter time, and Nan was naturally surprised to see the shining blue enamel that identified it to her as the machine of Sidney Blair, the partner of the Mr. Oliver of whom they had been speaking.

The Blair automobile was conspicuous and well known; Nan⁵² smiled, thinking she knew what had inspired Dick to wish for a car of his own to take him to **Washington**. She had no doubt, but that the others had seen it, too, but no one spoke of it; as they gathered strength for the final climb to the top, it was evident that all minds and hearts were upon a very different subject from the struggles of Blair and Oliver or its individual members.

Helena and Natalie had been walking arm in arm, chatting busily together, and the former at once seized the opportunity as the group came to a standstill for a moment to suggest quietly: "Wouldn't it be nice for us to have a club or society meet regularly and talk about our hopes and plans for the future? Natalie and I had thought of it before, and it seems that Deacon Tenney's offer has just brought us together more than ever, and we might help each other and get a bit of pleasure out of it and console the seven who do not get a chance to go to **Washington**."

"Great!" said Dean heartily. "I am for it! Let's choose our name right now; the Raleigh Ridge what?"

⁵¹ Break between Pages 38 & 39.

⁵² Break between Pages 39 & 40.

"The Raleigh Ridge Rivals," jeered his mate Clay.

"Or Raspberries!" suggested Dean.

"Raleigh Ridge Rouges," smiled Amy.

"More like Raleigh Ridge Rowdies," murmured Natalie, as Clay threatened them all with his long knife.⁵³

"Or Rockets—We'll all go up like shooting stars and then come to earth again ker-thud!" groaned Dean.

"It ought to be 'The Raleigh Ridge'—something that is pleasing to the ear," Henry agreed. "How about the Raleigh Ridge Rainbows? That seems to embody the idea of the pot of gold together with the suggestion of a possible disappointment. Dick, you haven't opened your mouth!"

"Raleigh Rainbows"—very neat," said Dick and turned suddenly to face them all.

At his tone, Nan glanced quickly in the direction he had been looking; involuntarily, it seemed the lad took a step nearer to her, and their eyes met.

What Nan saw, what Dick had seen, was the face of Mr. Oliver, whom they had left at the edge of the village as he hurried along the road. He must have ridden up with Mr. Blair in the machine and decided to walk back by the same route—"A queer proceeding," Nan thought idly. There were doubt and melancholy in his very gait when they had left him at the edge of the village; now he hurried along, frequently looking about him, but not slackening his difficult pace. A chance gap in the bushes, as the man raised his harassed face to the sky for an instant, gave a full view of his frenzied gestures.

The blue automobile was nowhere in sight.

⁵³ Break between Pages 40 & 41.

"What bold outlawry are you two about to perpetrate?" demanded mischievous Clay. His gaze traveled promptly toward the road as it showed here and there across the more open regions below them, but failed to discover anything of note. "You bare a betraying resemblance to the cat after the well-known episode of the disappearance of the cream, Nan; while Dick looks as though he hadn't made up his mind whether to be amused or displeased. Trying to preserve a discreet balance between the two has given him the expression of a discontented chipmunk—you know, on the jump here and there, but already discouraged at the least intimation of trouble."

"On the fence, you mean," amended Dean. "Clay hasn't misrepresented the case in the least; this is the way you actually look, Dick; we'll give you an imitation."

This caused much laughter, and in the beguiling fun of puffing out their cheeks to look as though the nut crop had been a genuine success, in the words of the speaker, and at the same time, pulling down their faces to look disconsolate, no more questions were asked, and even Dick and Nan forgot their⁵⁴ brief period of perplexity.

For a few minutes, a wild disorder seemed to animate even the sedate Henry Gray. As often as he caught sight of Amy with the distortion of her refined little face, he would rock from side to side with a fresh howl of mirth.

Henry had always admired Nan; as the best friend of his sister, he had been thrown much in her company, and no one could fail to find contact with Nan an incentive to progress.

Of the other girls, Helena Reed had been one of the Gray family more or less since the sad accident which had made her an orphan. She was a serious-minded girl with a considerate, well-balanced character, which made her a pleasant companion for Henry; then, too, she was 2 years older than his sister Natalie, more nearly his own age, and he could derive much benefit from associating with her.

Henry seemed older than his years. He found pleasure in thinking things out alone, weighing the behavior of his mates, and discerning the probable solution of all perplexing problems. To give him due credit, he was never disloyal; it was natural for him to think the best possible of all his friends and an insidious feeling of reproach that his facile estimation of the youngest member of his special set, whose habitually retiring manner had⁵⁵ led him to misjudge and belittle her, had been so far from accurate, made him now eager to reverse his shallow opinion. Amy's prompt intimation that she knew what she wanted, compared with the hesitation of the others at the time they were talking about the puzzling request of Deacon Tenney, had at first aroused him. From time to time, he had observed other signs that indicated he had perhaps unduly disparaged Amy, so far as⁵⁶ he had felt concerned about her at all, in his thoughts. He was now anxious to make amends.

So it was that Henry, the genius of them all at deducing any departure from the normal, had the misfortune to lose entirely the significance of the first odd feature of what proved to be a queer ending to their little party. Henry's mind, from a pleased consideration of the evidence of character in Amy, was concerned with a name for the Club. It became unanimously the

⁵⁴ Break between Pages 42 & 43.

⁵⁵ Break between Pages 43 & 44.

⁵⁶ The word "as" is used twice: Once in the phrase "so far as" and once by itself.

Raleigh Rainbows. Then he suggested that they continue to the top of the Heights. Nan announced that she was tired. She refused abruptly and at length with undisguised agitation to continue another step up the Heights. It was so unheard of for adventurous Nan, that the others forgot their boisterous mirth and plied her with questions. What had happened? Was she tired? Sick? Displeased in any way? Why not proceed to their destination? It was out of the question to move her or⁵⁷ to change her determination. She did make the admission after a long time that her head ached, but it was so evident that this was a perfunctory response to all their perturbed queries, that no one felt satisfied. Nan was not a perverse creature, but one of the most agreeable, yet it was impossible to dissuade her from her resolution to discontinue the climb to the summit. Nor would she explain why she was unwilling to go on to anyone's satisfaction.

"It's too late," she offered with a glance at Amy's wristwatch, which was the only one in evidence.

"Quarter of 6:00," said Dick, twisting his head to see. "I did not think it was so late as that, but we wasted a lot of time getting started. But it is Saturday night, and we don't have to hurry. A poor excuse—"

"Please stop. I'm not equal to it—that is to say—you must not insist," floundered Nan—Nan! Always so exact in her ready speech! "I don't mean to be a nuisance or to deprive the rest of you of any pleasure in the junket you have planned," she managed to add unhappily. "You can go on without me."

I refuse to favor the elimination of any one member of this Club," began Clay, now thoroughly rebellious. "Behave child!"

"What difference does it make where we have our frolic or⁵⁸ bacon-bat or whatever you care to designate it?" Dick berated him, **perceiving that** Nan was in earnest. "Right here, beneath the top of the mountain, there is a good, flat carpet of leaves on the ground where we can have our lunch. What's the good of another almost perpendicular climb? Let's drop our baggage here."

"But I want to know why," Clay persisted.

"As long as Nan advocates our remaining here, we ought to be willing," reproved Helena. "Let's have no discord in our Raleigh Rainbow octette."

"But since we are as near as this, why can't we go the whole distance?" repeated the persevering Clay.

"Do let's have everything harmonious as Helena advises," admonished Natalie. "The prospect⁵⁹ before us is one of the finest, even as high as this, so let's not trudge any further, but have our luncheon."

"We are sorry if anything has occurred to depress you," Dean proffered with mild dissatisfaction. "However, if you won't tell us—"

⁵⁷ Break between Pages 44 & 45.

⁵⁸ Break between Pages 45 & 46.

⁵⁹ In this context, "prospect" means "view," which is an archaic definition.

"Oh, I did not mean to disarrange the whole trip and disappoint everyone," Nan attested in dismay. "There is such a dismal, desolate atmosphere up there; it is so wild, solitary, not a cottage or even [a] cabin in site."

"I thought the wild and solitary aspect was what attracted you!" rejoined the astounded Clay. "I didn't realize⁶⁰ you were looking for a public avenue up there or a promenade with automobiles, taxis, and a procession with a clown, for all I know. I fail to trust the female of the race!"

Nan blushed. "Laugh if you want to; I deserve it," she admitted with disarming candor. "It may be that I am a misleading prophet, but for a few minutes, I had a queer sensation, as though something disastrous had happened. I don't believe in such nonsense after all, so let's go on up as we had planned."

"I protest; when Nan begins to prophesy⁶¹, it behooves us to take notice," reproved Dick, and Helena settled the matter by beginning to unpack.

However, this particular picnic seemed foredoomed to failure.

"We men trust girls less and less as we grow older, but we have to humor them," Dean observed pensively, as he nibbled a stray bit of bread. "What is that?"

A faint sound of someone calling came up the hillside, and in a minute, Dean's little brother Arnold came into the line of vision. He was running and trying to talk as he came. Dean went to meet him, helping him up the last of the steep grade to the little plateau where the eight friends were establishing their camp.

"Oh, Dean!" he panted, as he dropped flat⁶² upon the ground. "All of you! Listen! They want everyone to help! Mr. Blair has been missing for the past 10 days. His folks don't know where he went, but there is a note come, asking him to meet Leopold Oliver upon the Heights this afternoon. They're forming a party to look for Mr. Oliver anyway and talk to him. They think he'll be there, some of them do, and they are going to give him the third degree—that is what they say!"

⁶⁰ Break between Pages 46 & 47.

⁶¹ "Prophesy" is a verb that describes the act of making a prediction.

⁶² Break between Pages 47 & 48.

"Oh," cried Nan, with a consternation incomprehensible to the others. "Do you imagine he killed him?"

"Why, Nan," Henry confronted her in his most peremptory⁶³ manner. "For sheer imbecile jumping at conclusions without thinking that you might head an innocent man for jail, commend me to a girl every time! Do you realize what you imply?"

"Do we imagine who killed who?" demanded Dean and Clay together, much exercised⁶⁴ by the confusing expressions of their companions.

"Your English is as incorrect as are your premises," reproved Henry, glad [to] change the subject. "You should use care to employ the proper pronoun, objective in this case; for example, 'who killed whom?'"⁶⁵ he recommended gravely.

"Nobody's killed yet—at least they hope so," continued Arnold, expanding his communication with difficulty. He was exhausted by his long run uphill, but anxious to impart what he had heard. "They can't find Mr. Blair, and some say Mr. Oliver's mind may have become unbalanced by his troubles, and they expect him⁶⁵ to do something insane sometime, if he hasn't already committed some unknown crime," he explained. "Mr. Blair went off in his machine 10 days ago, they say."

"Then he didn't go far, for we saw him about 2 minutes⁶⁶ ago," Helena smiled, as she continued to undo the packages and boxes unceremoniously strewn about on the ground.

"Poor Mr. Oliver is on County Street right now. We passed him as we left Raleigh Ridge," added Natalie. She made an imperfect effort to conceal her indifference to the fortunes of the explorers who were encroaching upon their excursion ground as she concluded, "with the amount of exertion he was putting forth, he has about reached the corner of Empire Street by this time!"

"By the time he gets up to the Heights, he'll need a shave—if he walks up!" laughed Dean impatiently.

"We did see him down on the edge of the town, and as we were hurrying, he impressed us as moving very warily," Nan commented with infinite concern in her voice. "However—"

"Nan, you are bound to conjure up [a] mountain of misery and confusion for your own undoing," Dick implored her hastily and with unconcealed energy. "It is expedient to consider well the consequences before communicating all your unwelcome thoughts."

"Do you mean to imply that you are cognizant of any embarrassing evidence that would tend⁶⁷ to condemn or implicate unhappy Mr. Oliver in such unfeeling haste?" Henry demanded with increasing force. "I am convinced there is something uncanny about you

⁶³ "Peremptory" means authoritative.

⁶⁴ In this context, "exercised" means "worried."

⁶⁵ Break between Pages 49 & 50.

⁶⁶ There is clearly an error here. The shorthand says "months." It should be "minutes." The shorthand reads T-OO-M-TH-S-G. It should be T-OO-M-E-T-S-G.

⁶⁷ Break between Pages 50 & 51.

today, Nan, but keep separate what you are able [to] affirm from observation and what you infer, but are unable [to] substantiate. Don't confuse the two. I confess you are so unlike our gay, independent Nan, I wonder what has unnerved you."

"It must have happened several days ago," Natalie ventured with friendly concern, as Nan stood embarrassed and hesitant. "You have been inattentive and uneasy these last few days, Nancy, but I thought you had taken to heart the question of the Deacon's prize and were expending your best endeavors upon that. I don't think it can be the affairs of Messrs. Blair and Oliver. They have not the privilege of confiding in our ingenious Nan, but we all hope to hear they will be on their feet in a week or two."

"We all saw Mr. Blair a little while ago and left Mr. Oliver back in town," said Helena, going back to less personal matters, for she read Nan's injured countenance. Nan never liked to be examined or called to account. "Don't infringe upon our right to innocent conversation, Henry; we are all common mortals, and we are sometimes unwise. You should expect that. 'To err is human,' and so forth."

"Innocent! I should despair of you girls if you were called on⁶⁸ to testify; and if we ever meet in court, I hope you will be on the other side of the case. I'd rather have you against me than for me!" Henry disregarded this cousinly banter and viewed them with unalloyed⁶⁹ disgust. Innuendo, perjury, conviction, based altogether on impulse—they are nothing, mere instances in your exhilarating careers, I suppose! You would show up as unconscious prevaricators⁷⁰ before the most lenient cross examination!"

"We will never be subjected to another examination as cross as yours! Don't be so crushing, Henry, with your exemplary and impromptu efforts as counselor for the defense," Natalie besought him. "Indeed, we all recognized Mr. Blair a few minutes ago, if that is what is exasperating you."

"You are a most competent set of individuals, all with exceptional competency and consummate impudence in embellishing plain facts!" Henry retorted. "For my part, I desire to go on record as follows: I am able to say that I saw an automobile, which resembled that of Mr. Sidney Blair in being large and blue. I can swear to that."

"Oh, that's what you mean!" Natalie was conquered, but not subdued.

"Forgive our misconception of the subject; it all comes from our having immature minds," Helena explained with gentle irony.

"Say! Aren't you going to run along up to the Heights to see if Mr. Oliver is up there⁷¹ to meet Mr. Blair?" queried little Arnold, who had been ignored longer than he considered necessary. He had examined his surroundings, listened to Henry with open-mouthed submission, although not comprehending in the least, and now fixed an unwavering eye upon the road. "The Blair family have [sic] found a letter from old Oliver that says for Blair to meet him on the Heights this afternoon," he repeated. "There are a good many people going up to see if Mr. Blair's come back to meet him up there. The letter was among the contents of his desk, all opened, so they know he read it—Mr. Blair did. His family is wild

⁶⁸ Break between Pages 51 & 52.

⁶⁹ "Unalloyed" means "pure."

⁷⁰ "Prevaricators" means "liars."

⁷¹ Break between Pages 52 & 53.

about not knowing where he was all last week, but they were too proud to let it be known until they had to. All their letters have been coming back 'address unknown' from the place in New York where he said he was going. I could have been up there now, the first one up, if I hadn't taken the indirect way, so as to tell you about it, Dean Ellery!" he finished quickly.

"You are an incontestable acquisition to our convention," Henry proclaimed with exaggerated emphasis. "You ought to receive a medal for conspicuous exertion."

"He means you are a conscientious infant," Clay commended the little fellow. "Come on. A good thing we didn't unload more than we did."

Nan stood unmoving through this⁷² incessant chatter, which reached her ear through a dream-like confusion. After her first exhibition of concern, she had subsided into an uncomfortable silence. All inexperienced as she recognized she was, she also felt that her uncertainty and indecision were a warning. She decided definitely against offering her information unasked, however much her altogether candid instincts forbade subterfuge. She was somewhat disconcerted at an imperious tap on the arm from Dick as he passed her with the other lads and was conscious of his somewhat incoherent murmur to the effect that it would be best to say nothing on the subject of their mutual discovery of Leopold Oliver on his way down from Raleigh Heights, when everyone else believed him to have remained down in the suburbs of the town. How could he have gained the Heights so quickly, if not in the blue machine, which all had seen, although they had not seen its occupants?

Nan could only conjecture that he had gone up in the car with Mr. Blair. What had he encountered so to excite him? Nan tried to reconcile her different impressions, but could not accomplish it. If Mr. Blair had some ulterior connection with the implied insolvent condition of the firm, and finding it inexpedient to act without the compliance of his partner, had commanded the meeting—but that would not account for the letter from Oliver to Blair!⁷³ If Mr. Oliver's cognizance of the injury being done him had led to a quarrel—Nan's mind refused to continue on that trail. She felt that it was an unfair combination of events that had made her, with Dick, an unconscious spy upon the furtive actions and almost insane gestures of the unfortunate man and that it would be improper to disclose her uncertain and unpleasant forebodings unasked.

With all this inner complexity, her subconscious mind at work uninvited upon the problem, Nan now took her share of the unexpected repacking and picking up, which would leave the place of their incomplete exploit unimpaired by its unforeseen and hasty conclusion. The boys by nature, immune to any pangs of conscience in regard to such commonplace duties, had unconcernedly unburdened their arms of all inconvenient packages pertaining to the commissary section and departed without ceremony. By the time the girls had completed their work, they heard voices on the main road, and with ill-concealed relief, Nan suggested that they join the others. She was far from being an excellent actress, and she was unwilling to confess to her intimates that she still had a dismal feeling that all was not as usual upon Raleigh Heights.

⁷² Break between Pages 53 & 54.

⁷³ Break between Pages 54 & 55.

As Arnold had intimated, a great many people felt called upon to investigate. As the girls forced their way across country to the road and met and greeted various friends, two automobiles⁷⁴ passed in single file necessarily along the lane the blue car had taken.

"The constable, the mayor, and the whole Blair family!" said Natalie. "And Clay's father! Why he's brought Fred Perry, the big city lawyer! And my father has a car full of important-looking men—his hospital committee, I do believe!"—for Natalie's father was a doctor of medicine.

"It seems to be more than a local affair. I suppose that there are unusual conditions that Arnold couldn't tell us," Helena surmised. "Here is Dick back again."

Dick disregarded them for the time and exchanged a few words with Deacon Tenney, who was walking up with the others. The Deacon promptly halted and in no uncertain terms announced: "The police will take charge from now on, and no one is to be allowed to explore any further until they come. The body of Mr. Sidney Blair has not been found, but there is every sign of a struggle up there, the ground trampled, bushes torn, and an old coat, which we all know to be the property of Mr. Blair. There are other evidences, which the morbid among you can soon confirm, but which I shall not enlarge upon. You are all shut out from the premises at present, so you may as well go home."

"Wonder what he's tagging along for," said a⁷⁵ small boy, and a general smile relieved the tension.

Dick meantime had sought Nan, who lagged behind her own small group and cautioned her.

"Remember, Nan, Fleischman made a fortune minding his own business—which was yeast. Do you comprehend what I mean?"

But Nan ran off and left him without a word.

⁷⁴ Break between Pages 55 & 56.

⁷⁵ Break between Pages 56 & 57.

The complete disappearance of Sidney Blair with its attendant mysterious occurrences caused an extraordinary commotion in the erstwhile contented little colony of Raleigh Ridge. At first, petrified with indignation at the intrusion of mystery and possible crime into its exclusive precincts, the town emerged from its benumbed⁷⁶ condition to find Raleigh Ridge a matter of unintelligent discussion⁷⁷ and controversy in the subway and surface electric cars of the nearby metropolis and its paternal founders besieged by interviewers who misquoted them in large type in the first column of metropolitan newspapers.

Among the less patriarchal lights⁷⁸ of the town, there soon developed an uncontrollable buzz of animation. A prominent inhabitant had vanished from their midst, and his compatriots, distrusting their own interpretation of events, put a distinguished "investigator," as he instructed them to call him, on the case. The eight Raleigh Rainbows were interrogated collectively, but their unwavering contribution afforded little help. They had seen a blue automobile, but they were neutrally explicit as to when and where. The letter, which was thought to incriminate Leopold Oliver,⁷⁹ was produced, and Henry read it aloud.

Yes, they had encountered Mr. Oliver on County Street as they were leaving Raleigh Ridge. Yes, they had recognized him. No, they had left him there near the corner of Empire Street. No, it was not possible for him to have walked up to the Heights in the interval specified.

If, as a possible alternative, Leopold Oliver had ridden up to the Heights in the blue car, he could not possibly have been walking past the town hall as it was striking 6:00, and several men had been found who certified individually to having seen him there at that time or a minute after.

An impartial observer might have noted that at this reconstruction of events, which the investigator had compiled and tended with care, by the sworn testimony of esteemed citizens, Dick and Nan were extraordinarily moved—their faces expressing more profound anxiety and distraction than did the other six. Their interlocutor⁸⁰ noted nothing of this. He was disheartened by the absence of concrete information, without which no material progress could be made.

Sidney Blair had been gone more than a week before his loss was reported. If his family had intelligently and deliberately planned to obstruct the course of justice, they need have done no more than let the days slip by without making public their apprehensions.

Among friends and acquaintances of the missing man were all sorts of conjectures, dismal forebodings as to⁸¹ his ultimate discovery, and a general interchange of ideas on the subject, many of them unrestrained by the limits of common sense.

The incontestable evidence of a struggle on Raleigh Heights, of broken bushes, and an irregular length of ground churned up by a contest between heavy bodies, even traces of

⁷⁶ "Benumbed" means deprived of physical or emotional feeling.

⁷⁷ "Discussion" is written incorrectly. It is spelled "D-S-C-F," but it should be "D-S-C-SH." It looks like a non-existent word "disconfidence."

⁷⁸ In this context, "lights" means "leaders."

⁷⁹ Break between Pages 58 & 59.

⁸⁰ "Interlocutor" means "interrogator."

⁸¹ Break between Pages 59 & 60.

blood, which the experts analyzed and pronounced to be human, were nevertheless considered of little interest by the more conservative in the face of the contradictory absence of criminal motive. There were tracks of the blue automobile on the road leading up from the Ridge, but these did not go down to the town; the tire marks of a heavy car, which might possibly have been Sidney Blair's, though not necessarily, showed double, and there was clear proof of it backing into the bushes and turning some distance from the entrance of the road from the Ridge. The Rainbows must have seen it on its return journey up to the top. There was nothing to show that this car, after working its devious way back to the Heights on the Ridge side, had not gone down on the opposite side of the mountain to a much-travelled road, which in turn led down at an angle to the water. A small collection of fishermen's huts, with an occasional summer cottage, known as Bennett's Landing, was at the intersection of this road with the state highway, and⁸² from this, ran an extension of the Interurban⁸³ Electric Railway along the shore, where traffic was literally without intermission.

Thus, the country "back of the beyond," as the literary Helena loved to call it, offered unrestricted way of escape by land and water. From Bennett's Landing, the intermixture of tracks made a pattern too intricate for the detection of any special car.

Furthermore, the rumor that the blue automobile was not after all Sidney Blair's car went uncontradicted, since no one else could be found who had seen it, much less recognized it; our eight from Raleigh Ridge had more or less unconsciously noted it as a sort of interloper on the ordinarily deserted road and a subsequent interruption to their little excursion.

"That's one of the queerest features of the whole thing," exclaimed Henry, as he talked about it at home with his sister and cousin. "It's a well-known fact that when a man is reported missing, people always show up from the four corners of the earth who have seen him and are prepared to swear⁸⁴ to his identity. There are so many blue automobiles in the country, too, you'd think there'd be a dozen experts at Bennett's Landing alone, confident that a blue automobile actually did go from the Heights on their side, or at least bear witness that they had seen a blue auto these last⁸⁵ few days, that they'd contrive to introduce as the one in question."

"I thought there was no doubt about the machine having gone through Bennett's Landing," said Natalie abstractedly, while Helena offered, "They said they found tracks."

"They found too many tracks intermingled," smiled Henry. "Whether or not the blue car was Mr. Blair's, it didn't have chains on. The tracks on our side of the Heights prove that. But from the piece of land the police have roped off, which is so mixed and intercrossed, it shows nothing but an interesting rumpus of some kind. There are marks of chains in the road, however. Did another machine with chains on go up to the Heights? And then where did it go? And have we any business to take it for granted that Mr. Blair was there at all, as he disappeared with his car more than a week ago?"

⁸² Break between Pages 60 & 61.

⁸³ "Interurban" is spelled "Detached N U-R-B-N." It should be spelled "Detached N E-R-B-N."

⁸⁴ "Swear" is spelled "S-A-R," but is missing the line under the "A" that makes the "oo-ah" or "W" sound.

⁸⁵ Break between Pages 61 & 62.

"I am very sorry⁸⁶ that there is any bad feeling towards poor, forlorn Mr. Oliver," said gentle Helena. "The man is almost ostracized by some people, and it seems to me he looks more dejected day by day."

"Not really!" said Natalie in distress. "Whatever can they prove against him?"

"Nothing, as I am glad to see by the morning's paper," answered Henry. "They have not, strictly speaking, [a] legal right to bother him at all, but it would look odd if he⁸⁷ refused to answer. It is bad enough though, for he seems unable to give an intelligent account of his whereabouts for the whole afternoon; and although that isn't strictly demanded, the time we all saw the blue automobile we took for Mr. Blair's, being so accurately fixed at about quarter of 6:00, it does create a bad impression and detract from public sympathy. As we all know, concentration for any prolonged period was beyond him weeks ago.

Luckily, he is unconditionally safe because there are people who swear by the town hall clock and know that he was near the entrance of the town hall at 6:00, whatever abstruse theories some of the contrary patriots of this town may entertain!"

There was a three-cornered exchange of smiles at this, as it recalled an amusing altercation between Henry and a certain eccentric and illiterate old gentleman, who had been extravagantly positive in his assertion that "whatever time they read on that there town clock, it is a lie and again' the scripture, which says time and tide wait for no man. Contrariwise, no man's got a call for interfering with the time of our forefathers on the other end of it. Calling it 12:00 when it ain't but 11:00 every day this summer don't make the sun up above your head same's it was at noon in the time of your forebears, and the patriots of this village ought to raise right up and haunt ye!"⁸⁸

Henry had endeavored⁸⁹ to explain to the old man the interpolation of definite man-made time into the abstract idea of it with the subsequent right of intervention for the convenience of man-made methods of living, but had suffered an utter rout⁹⁰ and retired in disorder to the uncontrolled mirth of his audience.

Natalie smiled in retrospect and murmured, "The next time you feel like contradicting old man Weaver, you might call it an exhibition of ultra-patriotism⁹¹ and sell tickets, Henry."

But no one appeared to notice this sally,⁹² as Helena exclaimed in surprise: "There goes Nan Hill! Wherever is she going in such a tremendous hurry?"

Natalie ran across the room, and Henry stood beside his cousin as she sat comfortably ensconced in the low window seat. Nan looked up and nodded as she passed by, but her expression of preoccupation did not lighten, and as she turned the corner out of sight, it was obvious that she was lost to the external world about her.

⁸⁶ "I am very sorry" is one phrase spelled "A-M-V-E-S-O-R." It should be spelled "A-M-V-E-S-O."

⁸⁷ Break between Pages 62 & 63.

⁸⁸ There should be a ">" for a new paragraph here, but there isn't.

⁸⁹ Break between Pages 63 & 64.

⁹⁰ "Rout" means "defeat."

⁹¹ The "ultra" prefix in "ultra-patriotism" has the opening pointing down. The opening should be pointing left.

⁹² "Sally" in this sentence means "clever remark."

"I think Nan has changed lately," said Helena. "It seems as though she is more introspective than she used to be. She was always so quick and decided in all her views—They were usually right, I'll admit—but now, she seems [to] stop and consider whether a thing is right; she seems anxious for someone else's opinion where she was once ⁹³so independent. What can have subdued her?"

"Commend me to Nan forevermore for unrestrained intrepidity⁹⁴!" was Henry's unretracted opinion, "not to say an obstreperous⁹⁵—"

"We haven't seen her at this house as much as usual," Natalie interrupted with sisterly unconcern for this intrusion. "She'll always be the same enterprising and entertaining Nan, as intrinsically open and honest as the day, but she is growing up. We all are, for that matter!"

"Deacon Tenney's offer of a prize for the best letter telling of our ambitions has started it all," said Henry. "It has set us all to concentrating on whether we have a constructive ambition and whether it is intelligent enough to be entered for a prize."

"Yes, but I think Nan knows something she doesn't want us to know she knows about that Blair and Oliver affair," said Helena unexpectedly. "It was always distressing to Nan to hide anything, so she is constrained and distraught in our presence. There is something of the altruist in Nan, and we may be sure she is disinterested, however we interpret her extreme abstraction. She was not like the Nan of old, the day of the bacon-bat, and that is the day they went hunting Mr. Blair and didn't find him, but did find his old coat on Raleigh Heights."

"Which his wife says she gave away to a tramp months ago. So that's that," said Henry. "You don't think Nan knew the tramp?"

"Indeed we don't mean [to]⁹⁶ insinuate anything to the injury of our Nan," Natalie replied contritely. "Whatever obstruction intervenes, she will conquer, and it will be done in Nan's way and not ours, so let's give her a vote of confidence and electrify our instructor Mr. Peterson tomorrow morning by our perspicuity⁹⁷ in regard [to] the intricacies of the 'winged art.'"⁹⁸

⁹³ Break between Pages 64 & 65.

⁹⁴ "Intrepidity" means "fearlessness."

⁹⁵ In this sentence "obstreperous" means "unrestrained."

⁹⁶ Break between Pages 65 & 66.

⁹⁷ In this sentence, "perspicuity" means "acute perception."

⁹⁸ Winged art often depicts the winged goddess of victory or the winged god Hermes.

Nan was no devotee of the world's best literature like Helena, nor a declaimer⁹⁹ of the superb orations of a former and more eloquent generation, a pastime which Henry found agreeable in his superfluous¹⁰⁰ leisure. Her translations of the classics had never risen above the average paraphrase of any unintellectual undergraduate endowed with a superficial ease of diction. A superlative sense of rhythm, however, had been included in her superior qualities, and she never suppressed an inclination to nonsense verse, by which her superabundant sense of humor was declared at the most unlikely times. The uninteresting aggregation of similar words in some of the lesson vocabularies often distracted her ear, intruding at the most inopportune times.

Over-earnest was Nan, overwhelmed by the magnitude of her undertaking, or she could not have passed the Gray homestead this afternoon, super-sensitively conscious of the three pairs of eyes unsuspiciously following her progress. She suddenly felt [a] disinclination to her errand and had to exercise much self-control to keep from running back to her mates and¹⁰¹ dismissing the affairs of Messrs. Blair and Oliver from her overwrought mind.

But Nan had hitherto unsuspected strength of character underlying her shortcomings. She would not retrace her steps, though the enterprise undertaken caused her supreme distress, but marched posthaste on her way. Procrastination was not one of Nan's faults, nor was introspection a habit. She soon found she was humming:

"Macintosh McKenzie MacDougall Hill,
Lived 90 years and never had a thrill!"

"which had occurred to her most inconveniently as she had translated the shorthand lesson for the succeeding day.

"He was a lucky MacIntosh," thought Nan, and this proving unexpectedly humorous, she was inclined to smile as Dick Keene, coming out of the post office, hastened to overtake her.

"Hello, Nan," said he, supremely unconscious of intrusion, though she shortened her steps to let him pass. "Were you going to a fire?"

"No, but I am overdue at Uncle Nat's office. I called him up this morning, and he agreed to be there at 3:00," Nan answered shortly.

"A paragon among business women, aren't you?" said the unsuspecting Dick in what Nan resented as a patronizing manner. "I'll trail along¹⁰² as far as Parade Street to see that everything's all shipshape. I've been trying to get a chance to talk with you for a week," he added aggrievedly. "But you are always under full sail. ("As though I were a ship," Nan thought superciliously.¹⁰³) ¹⁰⁴"I could have overtaken¹⁰⁵ you yesterday, but Henry and

⁹⁹ In this context, "declaimer" is "one who speaks in an oratory manner."

¹⁰⁰ In this context, "superfluous" means "extra."

¹⁰¹ Break between Pages 67 & 68.

¹⁰² Break between Pages 68 & 69.

¹⁰³ "Superciliously" has the disjoined prefix "s" facing right. It should be facing left. In this context, "superciliously" means "haughtily."

¹⁰⁴ This may be unclear, but Dick is still speaking after Nan's thought in parentheses.

¹⁰⁵ "Overtaken" is written incorrectly as "undertaken" with a disjoined O instead of a disjoined OO prefix.

Natalie were coming along, and that lad is over-fond of extracting information from transparent souls like us. You're never alone for 2 consecutive minutes!"

"That's so," said Nan overcome by laughter. "Oh, Dick, you are worse than MacIntosh MacKenzie MacDougall! What's overshadowing your young life that you have had to postpone confessing to me so long?"

"You thoroughly understand what I mean," Dick told her aggressively. "It is not Mac what's-his-name—he's untranslatable!¹⁰⁶—that's on your mind that you are going to see Deacon Tenney about!"

"Here's Uncle Nat now," said Nan hastily, as an eagle-faced old man came toward them.

"Don't, Nan!" Dick implored almost inaudibly. "Keep your own counsel awhile longer at least."

"Uncle Nat, I wanted [to] ask you something, to consult you," was the defiant response to this. Nan had no anticipation of a pleasant interview with the Deacon under any circumstances, but at least the suspense would be short-lived.¹⁰⁷ With the prospect of transferring the burden of her secret, she felt less aggrieved at the unpleasant experience she expected to undergo. Here was that interfering Dick trying to undermine her resolution!

Deacon Tenney was a man of good mental qualities, and, on the whole, of a kind heart. He could be magnanimous on occasion, as some of his antagonists could testify. But his was a character devoid of the finer qualities of life, which he would classify as superfluities¹⁰⁸ and superbly unsusceptible to charm in others. He was under-sized and sallow, and his hair, as Clay had insinuated, was transparently dyed to avoid any intimation that his years had superannuated him or suspended for an instant his various plans for the increasing of his bank account. The Deacon would transact business while the counterclaims of a mere niece remained unheeded;¹⁰⁹ as a matter of fact, he had quite forgotten that Nan had telephoned him and had no idea of adapting his business to her convenience.

"Don't undertake to hinder me now, Nancy; I'm in a hurry," he said with decision.

"But, Uncle, there was something I wanted to ask; I called you up, and you said you'd wait for me in the office—"

"Some other time," commanded the Deacon, and then with what was for him a flash of unprecedented good humor, he suggested agreeably, "Why don't¹¹⁰ you find a younger man, Nancy? There are plenty that are not overworked. Take Dick here for my understudy; he'll superintend whatever you want done better'n I could."

A slight smile transforming his serious countenance, the excellent old man passed on, disregarding the entreaty in Nan's face, superlatively¹¹¹ unconscious of having offended her susceptible feelings.

¹⁰⁶ "Untranslatable" is written like this on Page 106 of the 1916 Gregg Shorthand Manual.

¹⁰⁷ Break between Pages 69 & 70.

¹⁰⁸ "Superfluities" are unnecessary or excessively large amounts of something.

¹⁰⁹ "Unheeded" is missing the dot for the "h."

¹¹⁰ Break between Pages 70 & 71.

¹¹¹ "Superlatively" is written "SUPR-R-K-A-TIV-E." It should be "SUPR-L-A-TIV-E." The plate writer intended to write an "l" following the disjoined prefix, but it looks more like "R-K."

"There, Nan," said Dick, as she paused uncertainly. "I cannot understand why you seem paralyzed with fright at the very idea of talking about what we saw on the road to Raleigh Heights, even to me who saw what you did; or¹¹² why, having kept quiet as long as this, you now want [to] take the Deacon into consideration when you decline to mention the subject to me."

"I do behave like a superstitious old granny," Nan admitted. "I have an antipathy¹¹³ to the suppression of facts, even for [a] short time; perhaps I overrate their value, but that does not alter the case. Somehow I can't look Mr. Oliver in the face, knowing that he doesn't realize that I suspect him of transgressing. My non-intervention has cost overmuch in the way of an undercurrent¹¹⁴ of misery that does paralyze me with fear that I am not doing right, as you say. I should be overjoyed to have Uncle¹¹⁵ Nat understand the case."

"Ought we to have told at once that we stood in such a way as to overlook the road through the underbrush and that we saw what is unsuspected by all? You and I know that Mr. Oliver did get up to the Heights to meet Sidney Blair; we saw him coming down and behaving suspiciously, to say the least."

"But our declaration would be overbalanced by the fact that Inspector Patterson has the time all figured out, and there are four good men whom we all know to swear that Mr. Oliver was just going by the town hall at 6:00," objected Dick. "Something is wrong somewhere, but why should we interfere to make trouble for Oliver, when we both believe him innocent of any wrong-doing? You'll agree with me that the man is not an attractive fellow, he is almost a recluse, and that aggravates the overt antagonism against him, which no one could have anticipated. I have overheard some very anti-Christian conversation! You understand what will be said if we tell all we know."

"We understood that from the first," Nan conceded. "Oh, Dick, there he is!"

In the earnest continuance of their talk, the two young people had been shortening their steps, until now they were at a standstill and stood side by side at a store window under a shipwright's¹¹⁶ sign, where the multitudinous paraphernalia of the trade could be dimly seen through the almost untransparent glass.¹¹⁷ The building was an old and dilapidated one; the superstructure, which some slight transformation made evident, was a dwelling house,¹¹⁸ hung over the first story in such a way as to make a darkened and unobtrusive shelter for private conversation. At the nervous touch of Nan's hand upon his arm, Dick stood silently and watched the familiar figure of Leopold Oliver, which turned the corner from a side street. Looking neither right nor left, the man hastened along County Street, where they had seen him on the memorable day they had been discussing, and moved by a common impulse, Dick and Nan strolled along in the same direction some distance behind.

¹¹² "Or" is written "O-RD" with a curved "R." It should be "O-R."

¹¹³ "Antipathy" means "aversion."

¹¹⁴ "Undercurrent" is written incorrectly with a disjoined O, instead of a disjoined OO.

¹¹⁵ Break between Pages 71 & 72.

¹¹⁶ A "shipwright" is a ship builder.

¹¹⁷ Break between Pages 72 & 73.

¹¹⁸ A "dwelling house" is a house used as a residence and not for business purposes.

"Pshaw! He's going in; he rooms there," whispered Dick, as they watched him enter [a] gate at the end of the street. "You'll be having me as suspicious and unaccountable¹¹⁹ as you are, Nan! What do you think? He's hidden Mr. Blair in his room?"

"I think I wish I could talk with Uncle Nat," said Nan obstinately. "I want [to] ask some responsible person whether I've done right to hold my tongue so long."

"So long!" echoed Dick in exasperation. "You make me think of the woman who said she could keep a secret, though they said women couldn't, because she had just murdered her husband, and¹²⁰ she was not ever going to tell anybody!"

"Now you're overdoing it—the cases are not parallel," Nan was declaring, when Leopold Oliver came back, shutting the gate behind him. Dick and Nan were nearly up to him then, and Dick made ready to bow¹²¹, but the man's short-sighted gaze passed over them abstractedly.¹²² His steps were now more rapid, and he had a peculiar, one-sided gait.

"What an unbecoming posture," said overhasty Nan. "Why what's he transporting?"

Sure enough, what appeared to be a large bundle, half overshadowed by his overcoat where it was not wholly concealed, was hampering his progress. With an exclamation of disgust, which they could overhear, the unsuspecting man changed his burden until they could easily oversee the large, irregular bundle, loosely wrapped in paper and of a size inconvenient for carrying under the arm.

"Let him get way ahead and then follow him," said Nan. "If he isn't doing any harm, he won't care."

"Of course he won't care; you are too concerned over the whole matter," said Dick indignantly. "Nan, have you ever transmitted your suspicions to a single person?"

Nan's bright face grew overcast with contrition. "No, but my conscience is overburdened with concealing them," she admitted. "Dick, I believe¹²³ he is going to take the road up to the Heights!"

Dick's countenance grew long. He had been a strong champion for Mr. Oliver and was ready to intercede for him to Nan whenever the opportunity offered. "Well," he conceded, "We'll see where he goes, though it does seem an underhanded transaction on our part."

"So it does on his," Nan pointed out. "Of course, there is only one way to construe¹²⁴ the incident of his being on the Heights when we saw him in the overcredulous¹²⁵ minds of some people."

"Self interest would forbid his mentioning it, if he was there on that day," Dick confessed. "It's a wonder Mr. Patterson didn't find it out. Investigators are believed to have a supernatural nose for those matters."

¹¹⁹ In this context, "unaccountable" means "puzzled." See Page 93 of the 1916 Gregg Shorthand Manual.

¹²⁰ Break between Pages 73 & 74.

¹²¹ In this context, "bow" probably means "crouch down out of sight."

¹²² "Abstractedly" means "lost in thought."

¹²³ Break between Pages 74 & 75.

¹²⁴ In this context, "construe" means "explain."

¹²⁵ "Overcredulous" means "gullible."

Nan's constraint having once been overruled, the two were talking freely now; she felt it a relief to speak out her thoughts to the one who could understand. This feeling strengthened as it became clear that the sad-looking man was going up on the mountain. He walked clumsily, yet covered the ground with apparent ease.¹²⁶ He paused to lift his unwieldy bundle to the other arm on the very ground from which, earlier in the month, the investigating party from the Ridge had been excluded, and then started down the incline at a rapid pace.

"Whew. I must be getting short-winded!"¹²⁷ breathed Dick, as the two conspirators in turn stood together upon the Heights. "Never mind the magnificent view, Nan; you will have [to] watch your step through the undergrowth here. You don't want [to] attract his attention by falling down and rolling over this perpendicular path to his feet! Besides, the man was not built for a shortstop;¹²⁸ he's too light weight!"

"You would be thin, too, if you were overwhelmed by the shipwreck of all your fortunes!" Nan was declaring, when Dick, by an inclination of the head, called her attention to the little fishing village, which they now overlooked, and whither their unsuspecting leader was directing his steps.

"Bennett's Landing," murmured Dick. "Perhaps he is going [to] jump overboard!"

This being properly ignored, the two followed in silence and saw him enter one of the shabby houses.

"Let's go into the office and look at antiques while we wait for him to come out," said Nan.

The post office at Bennett's Landing is of unparalleled interest to an antiquarian, for besides the postage stamps, postals,¹²⁹ and postal cards to be expected, there are displayed the antiques of many a household whose antecedents were seafaring folks, from shipmaster to shipboy, and who had hoarded the various oddities made on shipboard or washed up from an occasional wreck of the days which antedate the advent of engine¹³⁰ or motor. A small antechamber held these treasures; the low, intervening partition of hand-hewn logs was a guaranty of the antiquity [of the] building. Patrons were attended to by the neat postmistress, who was something of an antiquary¹³¹ under the supervision of the postmaster. The latter now emerged from his own small, segregated office at [the] sight of two unfamiliar faces.

"Would you mind telling us who lives in that house?" asked Dick, indicating the one Leopold had entered.

"Old Mrs. Oliver, a dear soul, overworked with the care of six grandchildren," answered the kindly postmaster. "She would be glad to see you, if you care [to] call."

After a brief exchange of courtesies with the accommodating pair at the antiquated post office, Dick and Nan traversed the short distance between the buildings and knocked at the door of

¹²⁶ The "s" on "ease" looks like "th" or "f."

¹²⁷ Break between Pages 75 & 76.

¹²⁸ "Shortstop" is referring to a baseball position here.

¹²⁹ "Postals" are "things related to a post office."

¹³⁰ Break between Pages 76 and 77.

¹³¹ "Antiquary" is "an expert and/or collector of antiques."

Mrs. Oliver. It was opened by a small child, who held the knob in one hand, while with the other she clasped a large rabbit of canton flannel.¹³²

On the floor beside the child, stood a magnificent toy horse on rockers, which would certainly make a very unwieldy bundle! Leopold was not in sight, but the tangled string and paper,¹³³ still holding the shape of the toy animal, gave convincing proof of the errand at Bennett's Landing!

¹³² "Canton flannel" is "a plain cotton fabric."

¹³³ The first "P" in "paper" looks like an "S."

It must not be assumed that the affairs of the unfortunate establishment of Blair and Oliver could long occupy the reflections of the octette of Raleigh Ridge students, who had so cheerfully named themselves the Raleigh Rainbows on the very day the disappearance of Sidney Blair was made public, to the abolishment of other and more pleasurable interests.

The once unexceptionable and harmonious little village had been thrown into a condition of breathless commotion and apprehension by the deplorable notoriety, which newspapers and a handful of would-be detectives, who unsuccessfully sought a solution of the mystery, conspired to inflict upon a helpless village.

Clay Emmet was disposed to regard the whole thing as an admirable provision of fate to "wake up the natives"—and was tactless enough to say so to the detriment of his reputation, as Deacon Tenney overheard the observation and retailed¹³⁴ it to Nan as confirmation of his low opinion of the rising generation in their shameful heedlessness and general inefficiency.

The irascible¹³⁵ Deacon might continue his arraignment of the young people at his leisure, and his admonition¹³⁶ fall¹³⁷ upon deaf ears, even in an assembly of¹³⁸ his peers, for it was a fact, however blameworthy, that the older folk of the town were no less stirred from their wonted¹³⁹ retirement than the young and thoughtless ones who welcomed the excitement. The location of Sidney Blair, the guilt or innocence of his sorrowful partner, formed a topic of agreeable and boundless conjecture at many a committee meeting assembled for quite different purposes.

As the days passed, and finally the weeks, and nothing noteworthy turned up to foment¹⁴⁰ any new excitement, it, of necessity, declined, however, and the Ridge as a whole, from being in a state of aimless ferment,¹⁴¹ resumed its composure. Leopold Oliver was no longer the cynosure¹⁴² of all eyes, but to Dick and Nan, he had never ceased to be an object of incomparable interest. The unfairness of her suspicions on the unforgettable excursion to Bennett's Landing had caused Nan to censure herself remorselessly, as though her uncharitable judgment had appreciably injured the unconscious man. She was felicitating¹⁴³ herself upon the narrowness of her escape from taking Uncle Nat into her confidence.

"For if he had been the least affable¹⁴⁴ or approachable that day, instead of having the rudeness to let me see how worthless he considered any communication I might make, I'd have told him that you and I saw Mr. Oliver some time later¹⁴⁵ than the others did and given him such a wrong impression of the poor man!"

¹³⁴ "Retailed" in this usage means "to relate or repeat in detail to someone."

¹³⁵ "Irascible" means "easily provoked to anger; irritable."

¹³⁶ "Admonition" means "reproof."

¹³⁷ "Admonition fall" is bad grammar.

¹³⁸ Break between Pages 78 & 79.

¹³⁹ "Wonted" is an archaic word for habitual or customary.

¹⁴⁰ "Foment" means "promote."

¹⁴¹ "Ferment" means "unrest."

¹⁴² "Cynosure" is "something that strongly attracts attention."

¹⁴³ In this context, "felicitating" means "congratulating."

¹⁴⁴ "Affable" means "cordial."

¹⁴⁵ Break between Pages 79 & 80.

"You can't see the absurdness of such a right-about-face on your part, just because old Leopold carried a couple of toys to some kiddies you don't even know," Dick grumbled in a vain attempt to understand the feminine temperament.

"Don't call him 'old Leopold.'"

"Old Oliver then—ancient Oliver—sounds like the 'Ancient Mariner,' but what has your endorsement of his expedition to Bennett's Landing to do with your position and mine as honorable witnesses?" asked the reasonable male.

"Because I know a man who would take all that trouble to furnish amusement to little children wouldn't commit a crime; I'm all eagerness to prove that he didn't—not to prove that he could have! I would like [to] tell some of these people who distrust Mr. Oliver so shamefully what I think of them!" answered the dauntless female.

"Whew!"

"Dick!" said Nan with great earnestness. "Do we really perjure ourselves by our willingness to let people believe what we know is not so?"

"We are blameless, I assure you. We have answered with praiseworthy fearlessness every question asked, and I can't think we are required to do more than that. Comment on our part was not warrantable; don't you remember the¹⁴⁶ unquestionable harshness of Inspector Patterson throughout the whole inquisition; how impatiently [he]¹⁴⁷ requested us to be brief and to keep closely to his questions?"

"He did make himself awfully formidable—politeness was not in him, but that wouldn't excuse carelessness on my part at least; I suppose one should judge for oneself what is allowable." Nan grew thoughtful.

"Don't let yourself get morbid and fanciful," Dick cautioned her. "Let's leave this interminable subject for some[thing] cheerful, Deacon Tenney and a trip to **Washington**, for example."

"You do seem so sure of yourself, it is [an] inspiration to feeble creatures like myself," Nan said gratefully. "We haven't given much thought to preparedness for Uncle Nat's experiment, that is unquestionable; but there is ample time between now and a year from graduation, the time he has appointed for the attainment of whatever goal we have chosen."

"That latter statement is questionable, unfortunately for us; for myself at least," Dick retorted. "You haven't any idea of the abruptness with which graduation will come upon us, Nan; then the summer vacation and one short year of work for the attainment of our desires. In fairness to ourselves, we ought to pay your uncle the complement of appreciation of his kindness."

"I spoke heedlessly as usual," lamented Nan with contrition. "I wonder how the others are getting along."¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Break between Pages 80 & 81.

¹⁴⁷ There is a blank spot where the word "he" should have been written. It is uncommon to omit a word like that in this version of Gregg Shorthand.

¹⁴⁸ Break between Pages 81 & 82.

"We will be in a position to find out tonight, if we listen carefully and put a few artful questions when necessary," Dick assured her.

"Oh! Sure. Sure enough! My forgetfulness is incredible, but we have had so few formal ones, I'd forgotten there was a Club meeting tonight. Just suppose this were my turn to have it at the house!¹⁴⁹ There's every indication that I should have forgotten it just the same. What an acknowledgement of thoughtlessness!"

The two young people parted at the Library door with a mutual exclamation at the lateness of the hour.

The public Library at Raleigh Ridge was a fragmentary affair, guiltless of adornment on the outside and on the inside, providing full exposure of the humbleness of its origin. The two-tenement house had been altered as little as was consistent with the new purpose of the establishment and was plain to the point of bareness. Herein¹⁵⁰ were no treasures of venerable erudition, nor fashionable brochures upon subjects of momentary interest; there was, however, an assortment of readable and helpful literature; and a bountiful bequest¹⁵¹ to the town from an amiable citizen named Wentworth, whence the Library took its name, had enabled the Library Committee to add skillfully to their collection from time to time.

Insensibly,¹⁵² the place had grown into a favorite meeting place for the young folk of the Ridge, who often met there by appointment¹⁵³ or unexpectedly. There were many small apartments, which lent an air of comfort and privacy, and a low-toned conversation was quite permissible. The most watchful of parents never took exception to the place¹⁵⁴ of rendezvous. Dick usually left the hospitable place with a transient feeling of regret; there was little incentive in his own life to acquire books or the leisurely atmosphere for their enjoyment. On this afternoon, he bent¹⁵⁵ nimble steps towards his comfortless boarding place, ate his somewhat tasteless meal with all speed, and then lingered needlessly over his simple toilet for the evening.

The little club of eight students had held their impromptu meetings with variable success, until, at Helena Reed's suggestion, they had appointed the first Monday of each month for a regular Society meeting, every member to be present and to exercise a full measure of alertness, making the affair a success. These assemblies were to be conducted on the most approved lines, as the youthful and inexperienced members knew them, and at the first meeting with Helena as chairman, Nan had been elected president without opposition; Henry Gray treasurer, though there was at present nothing to treasure—as Clay artlessly pointed out, there was no assignable¹⁵⁶ reason for their continuing deficient¹⁵⁷ in that respect—and Helena secretary. Helena delighted in composition, and at 7:00 precisely, the eight being assembled in the library of the Gray homestead, which held so many inestimable associations for all of them, she read the minutes of the last meeting in her cool, agreeable

¹⁴⁹ The dot (.) is missing from "house."

¹⁵⁰ "Herein" is missing the dot (.).

¹⁵¹ "Bequest" is written "B-K-A-S." It should be "B-K-E-S."

¹⁵² "Insensibly" is written "N-S-E-N-B-E." It should be "N-S-E-N-S-B-E."

¹⁵³ Break between Pages 82 & 83.

¹⁵⁴ "Place" is written "P-L-E-S." It should be "P-L-A-S."

¹⁵⁵ "Bent" means "direct one's energies toward."

¹⁵⁶ In this context, "assignable" means "specified."

¹⁵⁷ Break between Pages 83 & 84.

voice, beginning with a careful description of the procedure of electing officers and ending with, "A social hour was then enjoyed and refreshments served on the porch."

"Too cold for any porch sessions tonight," Clay commented in an audible voice to be efficiently snubbed¹⁵⁸ by the swiftness with which Nan informed him of his transgression. He was out of order and must notify her of his intention to speak by addressing her as "Madam President" and then await her acknowledgement of his request, which was answerable by the announcement of his name on the part of the president, showing that his helpful remarks would be acceptable.

"Madam President," declaimed¹⁵⁹ Dean Ellery.

"Mr. Ellery," responded Nan amiably.

"Please pardon the rudeness of Mr. Emmet. There was no predisposition on his part to insult the August¹⁶⁰ chair."

"Nor the July one either," Clay amended with a grin, but he lacked the boldness to make this very loud, having had a sample of the wakefulness of the President to anything savoring¹⁶¹ of disrespect, and she thought best at this time not to notice him.

These meetings¹⁶² are for mutual helpfulness and to show our friendliness and thoughtfulness, one for the other, in the promotion of our aspirations toward a general success in the business world, and the particular acquirement of merit in the eyes of Deacon Tenney, who is to recompense one of us in a most desirable fashion," she told them with patient mildness. "Has anyone anything hopeful to offer?"

"Madam President," said Amy Decker with composure, getting upon her feet.

"Miss Decker."

"If it is in order at this juncture, I should like¹⁶³ [to] make a very personal confession."

"Certainly," said Nan, her amazement shared by the others.

"I wish [to] announce myself as no longer eligible to the Deacon's offer." Amy spoke with sweetness, but forcefully. "I can never feel grateful enough for the seasonableness¹⁶⁴ of his suggestion that we each put our ambition into definite words, for it forced me into action. I saw the needlessness of my drifting aimlessly along with the half-formed wish for a college education, but doing nothing for my own advancement. I have always lacked aggressiveness, you know.

¹⁵⁸ In this context, "snubbed" means "reprimanded."

¹⁵⁹ "Declaimed" means "spoke formally."

¹⁶⁰ "August" means "revered."

¹⁶¹ "Savoring" is written incorrectly, and looks like "wavering."

¹⁶² Break between Pages 84 & 85.

¹⁶³ "Juncture" and "I should like" are written very close together for no apparent reason. They look like they are close together for the omission of "of the." But "of the" does not belong in between that word and the following phrase.

¹⁶⁴ "Seasonableness" means "timeliness."

"Like the parrot in the story," Amy continued, smiling, "I said nothing, but I kept up an awful thinking. You know I love shorthand and typewriting (there was a groan from Clay, but they all sat motionless), so I thought of course, I could¹⁶⁵ make it serve to earn the extra money I'd need to get along with for 4 years.

"Then I talked it over with my father; he had been wondering how he could send me,¹⁶⁶ it seems, for Father has always set his heart on my entering some profession; but as you all know, he's been terribly set back by business reverses of late. There are hundreds of girls trying to earn their college money in the same way, so I thought I'd specialize and become wonderfully proficient along some one line."¹⁶⁷

Amy dimpled adorably. It cannot be said that she did not enjoy the remarkably close attention she received.

"So then I talked with Mr. Answorth, Father's business associate, and, simply because he was the only other man available, with Dr. Wadsworth. The dear old doctor is writing a book, and I thought perhaps I could type it for him to begin with, as his handwriting is so illegible, it would be useless to give it to a stranger. He was dreadfully afraid that I wouldn't understand a word of it and charitably began to make excuses, but I told him I was going [to] specialize on terms used in medicine and advertise exclusively among doctors, and so I am!

"I am going [to] choose a college in the big city of New York, and your father, Natalie, is to give me a list of the professional friends he has¹⁶⁸ there, the big scientific doctors who are giving lectures, writing papers, and so on, and when my general practice of shorthand is up to the mark, I am going to save all my ammunition for the profession of medicine. Dr. Wadsworth says the special equipment I will have should command special prices; but at least I'll be working with worthwhile men, and my own work will be useful.

"I wrote 'I want [to] go to college' on my paper for the Deacon; now I'd like [to] get it back and write, 'I am going to college!' I thank you for your offer, but I will have [to] give up my eighth of a chance to go to **Washington**; I couldn't spare the time!"

¹⁶⁵ Break between Pages 85 & 86.

¹⁶⁶ "Send me" to college.

¹⁶⁷ "Some one line" is written "S-M-OO-L-A-N."

¹⁶⁸ Break between Pages 86 & 87.

The Grays were people with all the fundamental qualifications which bring respect and honor in their relationship to a neighborhood and which make for stability and unification in a township. They were old fashioned in many ways, yet alive to the advisability of emulating a modern, though not radical, program in the education of their children. They believed in a methodical life for the formative years of childhood, but as there was every likelihood that the boys, at least, would earn their own living, a means of livelihood was to be chosen by each of them as early as there should be a probability of each lad knowing the signification¹⁶⁹ of his choice.

Dr. Gray's own education had proceeded along classical, rather than technical lines; he stood high in the medical ranks, but he was a man who cared little for the outward or ornamental rewards of his profession. He found stimulation in experimental work in his own laboratory, and the authorship of two or three books had widened his circle of fellowship among those who recognized his ability and wrote admiringly in verification of his conclusions.¹⁷⁰

With his boys, the good doctor maintained an attitude of friendship and sympathy. He thought longingly of the time when one of them might be ready to enter into partnership with him, and he had begun to speculate upon the question of the younger lads. The personification of intelligent fatherhood, he watched understandingly the development in Henry of something more substantial than he had known in the days of his own youth. Henry would never willingly stay in Raleigh Ridge all his life.

Natalie was a home lover; she had great adaptability to home conditions and enough musical talent to entertain charmingly when the occasion required, but Natalie's physical condition was not satisfactory; a recent appendicitis operation had left her below par and had caused a modification of their plans for her. There was the possibility of a trip southward for Natalie in the companionship of her father, but he felt that at present, she lacked the hardihood for sports and pastimes she would not knowingly forego. The obstacle once overcome, no stimulation¹⁷¹ would be needed, for Natalie was temperamentally ambitious.

For Henry, just entering upon manhood, the doctor realized in full the desirability of change; he had considered its feasibility, and it now appeared that [a] business journey eastward might be instrumental in bringing it plausibly to pass. He smilingly announced the acceptability¹⁷² of a companion on his travels.¹⁷³

"There's nothing hermetical¹⁷⁴ about my disposition, and I want a chum on my perambulations, but there's one specification I must make plain," he concluded warningly when the subject was broached.

"I must stipulate that my fellow-voyager must prepare for the hardships of solitude in the midst of a population of nearly a million whenever I am busy. There'll be plenty to see

¹⁶⁹ "Signification" means "meaning."

¹⁷⁰ Break between Pages 88 & 89.

¹⁷¹ "Stimulation" is written with the disjoined suffix "OO." It should be written with the disjoined suffix "OO-SH."

¹⁷² Break between Pages 89 & 90.

¹⁷³ This is not made clear. It is Dr. Gray who is making a business trip and wants a companion who can be on his or her own while the doctor attends to business. It is decided that his son Henry will go, because Natalie is not well enough to go.

¹⁷⁴ A "hermetical disposition" is not subject to outside influence.

around **Boston**, but you'll have to formulate your own plans and go about under your own¹⁷⁵ leadership, regulating your movements more or less by mine."

This was after Henry had spoken most convincingly of the practicability of his being the one to go. He had obligingly suggested Natalie, but his nobility was not put to the test. Natalie went about alone most unwillingly, and she was known to be exceedingly backward about it.

Accordingly, it was Henry who identified the spherical gilded dome State House of Massachusetts, as he stood on Tremont Street, looking northward to Beacon Hill on a sunny April afternoon. Before him, **Boston** Common spread enticingly in its magical glow of romance, for Helena had stimulated his interest in the courtship of the Little School Marm in the "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table,"¹⁷⁶ which she had found by chance in an old periodical and had read¹⁷⁷ aloud in her well-modulated voice. Helena would have made a sentimental pilgrimage down the "long walk," but Henry had a greater interest in places of historical value. The imaginative and speculative were but supplemental to the actual in the eyes of normal boyhood.

As a good American, he asked a clerical-looking policeman the direct route to Faneuil Hall, the Cradle of Liberty.

"Sure, it'll be a miracle if ye don't find yourself lost on the way," was the cumulation of a long answer. "If it was not against the regulations, I'd go with you," the big fellow ended with more sympathy.

"I might visit the Library first. I recognized that on our way homeward to our hotel last evening from the pictures I've seen," said Henry, grown amazingly meek. "I must be in the neighborhood of Copley Square now."

With an ejaculation of assent, the policeman continued onward, and the lad spent an hour with maps and guide books. Historically, he felt a kinship with "the Hub," in all its ramifications, which was not illogical, as his mother was of **New England** parentage, but in other ways, he felt himself a total loss, as Clay would have said, a fact¹⁷⁸ strikingly brought home to him on the morning of this, his first day alone.

In the downtown or business district, he had had the mortification of knowing himself thoroughly confused in the crooked, winding streets. Dr. Gray had taken an early morning train for Framingham, and Henry had easily found his way through some of the older parts of the city to his edification¹⁷⁹ and enjoyment. But having once explored the old Granary Burying Ground¹⁸⁰ and sought out the Hancocks, Adams, Bellinghams,¹⁸¹ and other names of interest, it was awkward to find oneself back there a second, even a third time, after long perambulating through streets, which became appallingly involved with junctions, alleys, and acute angles, which led back to the starting point. Henry never showed much volubility¹⁸² afterward upon the adventures of that particular morning.

¹⁷⁵ The word "your" is not present in the phrase "under your own," which is a very unusual omission.

¹⁷⁶ "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" is a collection of essays by Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.

¹⁷⁷ Break between Pages 90 & 91.

¹⁷⁸ Break between Pages 91 & 92.

¹⁷⁹ "Edification" means "enlightenment."

¹⁸⁰ Old historical cemetery on Tremont Street in Boston.

¹⁸¹ These are famous families buried in the cemetery.

¹⁸² "Volubility" means "talkativeness."

By the end of that afternoon, however, the young man felt cheerfully conscious of a rudimental¹⁸³ clarification of his ideas. Boston was not parallelogram-fashioned like the newer and more famous cities. A diagram showed the wayward tendencies of the streets, and a monumental tome¹⁸⁴ upon Boston landmarks spoke condescendingly of the difficulties experienced by strangers in "the Athens of America."¹⁸⁵ Henry smiled meaningfully¹⁸⁶ as he read on and felt that he had served his apprenticeship.¹⁸⁷ It was comical to note that he must have seen Faneuil Hall; he had been looking for a people's tabernacle¹⁸⁸—not a series of butcher-shops!

Next morning, he laughingly offered to act as guide for his father, and the two explored the northern and central parts of the city together and then made a round of the suburbs by automobile. This enabled them to include Concord and Lexington in their itinerary, and the older man, as well as the younger, more in friendly brotherhood than as father and son, felt the stimulative effects of so much actual observation of the classical scenes of early American history. Henry, never inarticulate, expressed himself with graphical volubility.

One day more about town, when Henry, thrown upon his own resources, bent his steps shoreward for a view of the wharves¹⁸⁹ and steamships, and then came "the day before the last." Dr. Gray announced much gratification at the results of his trip.

"We will spend this day at Plymouth," said he; but after reading his mail, he declared this to be an impossibility. "I am sorry [to] disappoint you, son," he said feelingly, "but this notification affects the governmental part of my business," and he indicated a cablegram, which had been forwarded.

"Won't you have any time for sight-seeing?" asked Henry pleadingly. "There's no flexibility to departmental¹⁹⁰ business," said the doctor. "The oracle hath spoken!"

Henry assented¹⁹¹ somewhat grudgingly; he was a lad of sensibility as well as sense and understood the almost sacramental¹⁹² nature of such cablegrams. He was exceedingly disappointed notwithstanding.

He sat in the little hotel parlor, a cynical half-smile replacing his usual pleasant expression, when his attention was diverted to an old lady who sat looking upward from a bit of Kensington¹⁹³ embroidery in her lap. A maid of the hotel approached her with a telegram, and at a low-voiced "Miss Remington!" the old lady half rose and tremblingly accepted the envelope. It was early morning, and no one else was about.

"Oh," said the old lady wonderingly, and Henry noticed in the one brief ejaculation that she spoke as though with a bad cold. The maid smiled slightly¹⁹⁴ and departed, and the old

¹⁸³ "Rudimental" means "fundamental" or "basic."

¹⁸⁴ "Tome" means "book."

¹⁸⁵ nickname for Boston, used in literary circles in the 20th Century.

¹⁸⁶ "Meaningfully" means "significantly."

¹⁸⁷ Break between Pages 92 & 93.

¹⁸⁸ "Tabernacle" means "house of worship."

¹⁸⁹ "Wharves" is missing the dot at the beginning.

¹⁹⁰ Break between Pages 93 & 94.

¹⁹¹ "Assented" means "agreed."

¹⁹² "Sacramental" means "powerfully binding."

¹⁹³ "Kensington" is a simple embroidery stitch.

¹⁹⁴ "Slightly" means showing a lack of respect; disparaging or insulting.

lady hurried her bright bit of canvas into its bag with slight regard for her own workmanship and opened the envelope.

"Oh," she said again, with difficulty in the articulation of the simple tone.

Henry went to her at once and looked downward into the wrinkled face. "May I help you?"

"Read it," she said beseechingly, and the young man read aloud:¹⁹⁵ "Meet me Arlington Heights after 8:00 tonight. Sorry. Bud."

"My brother," said the old lady, "was to meet me here. Thinks I am with friends. Thinks I am well. Bronchitis," she finished elliptically.

"You've got bronchitis. You ought to be home," expostulated¹⁹⁶ Henry.

The old lady smiled; and for the first time, Henry saw how bright her eyes were through her old-fashioned spectacles.

"Not now. Only voice gone," she amended. "Hate telegrams; hate spend day alone."

"Your brother isn't ill, or he'd have said so," said Henry soothingly. "What can I do for you? Is there anyone to telephone?"

"Friends of Bud, Arlington Heights. Others, Wellington Chambers. Hate telephone."

"Could I do it?" asked Henry.

The old lady eyed him piercingly, then scribbled the two names and addresses and handed over a small change purse.

In a few minutes, he returned crestfallen. The Harlingtons don't answer at all," he reported unwillingly. "The Buckingham boy is in bed with tonsillitis, but his mother would be delighted to see you."

"That's likely," said Miss Remington. "Never saw me in her life. Brother's friend. I might catch it. 'Alone in a great city!'"

"I am here," said Henry stoutly.¹⁹⁷ "I've no engagement, and I'll stay with you if you like.¹⁹⁸ I will show you some of the sights of **Boston**, if you are well enough."

"Well enough. Hoarse. Don't carry much money. Brother scolds me for that."

"My father would scold me if I didn't do all I could for you," smiled Henry. "Let's spend the day together, and I will get you out to Arlington Heights by 8:00 and stay until your brother comes, if you like."

¹⁹⁵ Break between Pages 94 & 95.

¹⁹⁶ "Expostulated" means "reasoned earnestly."

¹⁹⁷ "Stoutly" means "boldly" in this context.

¹⁹⁸ Break between Pages 95 & 96.

Miss Remington apparently did like, and Henry congratulated himself upon his own well-filled pockets, as he entered upon his career as guide and nurse. He saved the old lady's strength whenever possible and at the same time tried to show her as much of the city as he could.

First, the Faneuil Hall Market, a gift to the city in 1742, dedicated by James Otis in 1763 to the "cause of liberty," and near it, the site of the old Hancock Tavern, where lodged Talleyrand in 1795 in his exile from France. From the west side of Adams Square, reminiscent of the Ancient Town Dock, they wandered into a place of book-shops, where Henry could have spent the day, except for his healthy, young appetite. They lunched at a little coffee house in the neighborhood and then took the elevated¹⁹⁹ to Charlestown, with Bunker Hill monument²⁰⁰ as an objective point, and from Charlestown Heights, one of the most²⁰¹ beautiful of the **Boston** city park system, overlooked the river.

"We'd better finish the afternoon in the Library, so you won't be too tired; and then I will take you to Lexington and Concord by machine and bring you back to Arlington—it is on the same route," Henry suggested.

This plan was carried out with the addition of an excellent hotel dinner, for which his guest insisted upon paying and then merely signed her name to the order. That opened the lad's eyes a bit, but it was nevertheless a tale of surprise with amusement at his own gullibility that he poured into the paternal ears that night.

"Her dress was only gingham or something," he ended. "How was I to know that she was staying at the Copley Plaza, and her brother didn't want [to] meet her there because of it being so public? Who do you think brother Bud is? He's Hobart Remington, the explorer, back from Central China. She's always with him up to the last few years.

"She was born and raised in **Boston**—and I showed her the sights—explained them, too! I was all affability,²⁰² and I oozed information! But I don't care, Father; she was nervous and upset, and she told her brother she hadn't had such a good time since she rolled her hoop in the public gardens!²⁰³ I had²⁰⁴ to do all the talking; she was so hoarse; and it was natural for me to try to tell her things, wasn't it?"

"Very," said his father without smiling, which proved him the very deification²⁰⁵ of good fathers. Neither the excellent father nor his son had an idea of what the day's association with the sister of Hobart Remington was to mean to a young man, who some years later would be looking for a secretaryship²⁰⁶ to an American ambassador to China.

¹⁹⁹ The "elevated" is the "elevated railway above ground."

²⁰⁰ "Bunker Hill monument" is a war memorial.

²⁰¹ Break between Pages 96 & 97.

²⁰² "Affability" means "cordiality."

²⁰³ Hoop rolling is a sport, which involves rolling a large hoop along the ground.

²⁰⁴ Break between Pages 97 & 98.

²⁰⁵ In this context, "deification" means "perfect godlike example."

²⁰⁶ "Secretaryship" is "a diplomatic secretary position."

At the end of the Club meeting in May—for the Raleigh Rainbows had voted with unanimity²⁰⁷ to maintain the regularity of their meetings until summer—Henry was invited with some formality to give an account of his activities in **Boston**. This he did with journalistic dexterity, his familiarity with the geographic peculiarities of the vicinity and the natural affinity for all localities of patriotic interest, which exists in a lad with the personality of Henry Gray, lending an almost photographic authenticity to his descriptions. The girls heard him sympathetically, with many a romantic thrill, at the bits of historical or biographical interest with which Henry, with a versatility beyond his years, gave vivacity²⁰⁸ and sincerity to his tale. The boys listened more critically, a proclivity to caustic comment being no rarity to the sterner sex; but Henry's final experience with the sister of a celebrity told with gravity and a veracity,²⁰⁹ which emphatically described the young man's garrulity²¹⁰ and the docility with which Miss Remington accepted his amenities and absorbed his statistics—for²¹¹ Henry gave due value to his generosity in this particular—caused a burst of hilarity, in which the hero joined as readily as the rest.

"Well," said Nan. "For simplicity approaching the idiotic, Henry Gray, commend²¹² me to a lad of psychological and sociological proclivities like yourself!"

"You forget that taciturnity²¹³ is not my most conspicuous virtue," said Henry with entire tranquility, "and my simplicity approaches rusticity,²¹⁴ rather than the common or domestic brand of Simple Simon. But you can always count on my agility in relieving distressed femininity, though I am pathetically rustic, as I admitted. However, the truly great are always full of charity for all humanity!"

"I didn't mean to be sarcastic," said Nan apologetically. "Oh dear, I shall miss the Club this summer; I suppose it will be a dull life for me in this community. You'll all be leaving it for one reason or another, and I'll be left to mourn my frivolity, depravity, and general inferiority."

"Cheer up, Nan; you can always fill in the time by trying to solve the Oliver-Blair enigma," said Clay. "Moreover my prophetic soul tells me that we'll be here,"²¹⁵ speaking for himself and Dean. "We are going to make a frantic effort to prove our eligibility to the sudden era of prosperity, which seems to have overtaken this Club, but there's been fatality about my efforts so far. Fate always seems to pursue me with antagonistic animosity²¹⁶—tautologically²¹⁷ speaking. There is a systematic brutality with which the futility of my best endeavors is brought home to me—or, worse yet, to my father, who in turn brings them home to me. Or do you think it merely an astronomical miscalculation?"

²⁰⁷ "Unanimity" is "the state of being unanimous."

²⁰⁸ "Vivacity" means "liveliness."

²⁰⁹ "Veracity" means "truthfulness."

²¹⁰ "Garrulity" means "talkativeness."

²¹¹ Break between Pages 99 & 100.

²¹² In this context, "commend" means "recommend."

²¹³ "Taciturnity" means "silence."

²¹⁴ "Rusticity" means "rural simplicity."

²¹⁵ Break between Pages 100 & 101.

²¹⁶ "Animosity" means "hostility."

²¹⁷ "Tautologically" means "redundantly."

"I think you are crazy," said Dean. "If Nan has to have much of your society this summer, she'd better begin thinking up an excuse for going about with cotton in her ears. Dick will be here," he added slyly. "He seems to have too much dignity to speak for himself; but by being somewhat of a psychologist in a small way, I predict that you will meet him constantly during the season. It is really only the ladies who have the audacity to desert you."

Dean referred to Amy's plan, which she had explained involved starting for New York, as soon as her work for Dr. Wadsworth had ended. The tenacity with which Amy had applied herself to the practice of stenography, having mastered its technicalities²¹⁸ with drastic resolution and²¹⁹ fidelity, left her little leisure for festivity during the last of the school year.

Dr. Gray had a summer cottage, to which his family with Helena automatically repaired²²⁰ the first of July.

In contrast to the generality of such cases, proximity to graduation had not upset the equanimity of the Raleigh Rainbows. To the majority of young students, the gravity²²¹ and publicity of the great occasion lend a hypnotic air of finality to the event. They toil energetically to graduate; then they are theoretically through with study. It is axiomatic²²² that the young graduate feels himself "clothed with authority," a finished product.

Thanks to the Deacon Tenney, our friends at Raleigh Ridge were more forward-looking than this. They graduated; so did a hundred others that June, thousands of them throughout the land. The Rainbows belonged to the minority who regard a diploma as a step up, not a destination. Plans for the summer were humming, and by the end of June, it was only Helena who felt undecided.

"Of course I want [to] go [to] Gray Gables with you and the others," she confided to her sympathetic cousin. "But, oh, Natalie, I wish we were going to a big city as Amy is! I might meet an author!"

Helena's ambition was to write, by which²²³ she had no reference to chirography,²²⁴ but to the felicity²²⁵ of seeing her stories or verse in print. Gray Gables was part of a small, isolated community, and the nearest city was not large.

"Not an author in captivity there," Henry announced with solemnity, as Helena made her complaint at the family dinner table.

"Successful authors take a vacation in summer sometimes," observed Dr. Gray with an enigmatic smile. "They find something poetical and inspiring in majestic scenery, something artistic in the frugality and sincerity of country life. Sometimes they even have the eccentricity to turn their backs on their popularity with the urban crowd and seek to cultivate their own individuality in an out-of-the way spot like Gray Gables!"

²¹⁸ "Technicalities" is written "T-E-K-N-disjoined K-S." It should be "T-E-K-N-disjoined L-S." The word might be "techniques," which should be written "T-E-K-N-E-K-S."

²¹⁹ Break between Pages 101 & 102.

²²⁰ "Repaired" in this context means "went to a place."

²²¹ "Gravity" looks like "K-R-disjoined V." It should be "G-R-disjoined V."

²²² "Axiomatic" means "obvious."

²²³ Break between Pages 102 & 103.

²²⁴ "Chirography" means "penmanship."

²²⁵ "Felicity" means "happiness."

"Father, you monument of duplicity—there is not a real live author going to Gray Gables this summer?" exclaimed Natalie, while the others smiled at Helena with varying degrees of incredulity.

"Laura Wheelock has leased the big house on the hill next to our Gray Gables, you know," said the doctor with urbanity. "I know she is real and alive; as Mr. Ashby, the agent, has proved the reality of her check for part payment. You girls²²⁶ call her an author, don't you?"

"An author!" Miss Wheelock was a divinity they had long worshipped from afar. To have her for a neighbor all summer, only a stone's throw away.

Unfortunately, it developed that the most gigantic arm that ever lived as Natalie said, couldn't throw a stone far enough to hit Miss Wheelock. Dr. and Mrs. Gray, as old established summer residents, called upon the newcomer after a suitable interval. A maid ushered them into the hall with civility, disappeared, and came back with Miss Wheelock's regrets. Not at home.

"Sorry, Helena, but you will have [to] find another emissary,"²²⁷ said the good doctor with some asperity.²²⁸ "If the lady craves immunity from the neighbors, so be it, as far as your aunt and I are concerned."

"Let me try. I can tell her what a great man Shakespeare was," suggested Henry, half in fun. Helena agreed with alacrity.²²⁹

"You could ask her for her autograph."

"Such levity! Go there alone? She might kill me in pursuit of her art if she is a student of criminology," Henry objected. "Or no, I suppose she would send her maid to do it."

"The kind-hearted youth could not refuse, however, and he did receive the autograph by mail at the bottom of a²³⁰ note which said that ill-health and the severity of her program for the summer left the writer no vitality for social intercourse, and she begged to be excused from further effort.

Natalie looked thoughtful.

"Miss Wheelock has hired a **Tiptap**²³¹ typewriter for the season. I saw the box on her piazza, and I went into their office in the city this afternoon and asked," she announced some days later, as the girls were getting ready for bed. "They haven't much business just now, and a nice young man, a Mr. French, told me quite a bit about her. He knew who I was from seeing me with Dad so much last summer. He says Miss Wheelock asked him if there was a regular physician out our way, and he told her Father was the best there was, so perhaps she'll send for him the next time he calls!"

²²⁶ Break between Pages 103 & 104.

²²⁷ "Emissary" is "an agent sent on a mission."

²²⁸ "Asperity" means "sharpness."

²²⁹ "Alacrity" means "cheerful readiness."

²³⁰ Break between Pages 104 & 105.

²³¹ There is a principle of joining two separate parts of a word with a hook that is not introduced until Chapter 20 of the Gregg Shorthand Manual. That hook is used to join "Tip" to "tap."

Natalie returned from her next trip to town in some excitement.

"I took an examination in the **Tiptap** office just to please Mr. French," she reported. "There was nothing to it; a few business letters, such as we've studied for weeks. He said speed was not required so much as accuracy, and somehow that gave me confidence, and I never typed so fast in my life. He says I'm ready for a position, Dad, but I told him I'd promised to play²³² lazy this summer—until I've gained 15 pounds, you said.

"I wish you would go and call on him, Daddy; he thinks you are great!"

"Miss Wheelock won't have a stenographer," was Natalie's next report upon the subject. "She has had bad luck with them; of course she would! But I thought if Mr. French knew Helena, he could recommend her if ever there should be a chance. There is an employment **department** there, you know, and Miss Wheelock is truly not well, he says. She may have to have help. Take Helena in and introduce her, Daddy."

"I hope I have enough energy to take myself," said Helena emphatically. "It is not the examination I mind so much—"

"Why don't you take it them?" from Natalie. "It's a good beginning."

"It is," Helena agreed, "and I will. It is only when I think of really working for Miss Wheelock that I suffer from what Henry would call an 'inferiority complex.' I don't mind Mr. French at all; he isn't an author!"

"That is a bright and ambitious young man in the **Tiptap** office," said Dr. Gray the next evening. He had escorted Helena into town and then met her later at the office of the Typewriting **Company**.

"He's getting ready for his last year at college and wisely chooses to make his vacation profitable. He is a cousin of the manager, who has²³³ leave of absence for the summer. Now he himself is looking for a substitute for mornings only in the employment department. He says the activity before noon is only with that side of the business, and he wants a young person of judgment more than anything else. The work is not tiring. It seems only a question of fitting round pegs into round holes. Do you understand it at all, Natalie?"

"There's a card file with the qualifications of all²³⁴ applicants for positions on record," said Natalie with celerity.²³⁵ "My own is there, and Helena's is made out by now, no doubt. Anyone requiring the services of a stenographer and inquiring at the **Tiptap** office is sent the one who seems most suitable. Of course the one who has charge of the card file has also a good **recollection** of the personality and general adaptability of the stenographer, acquired from personal contact that can't be expressed on any card index; but that is what he means by needing someone with 'good judgment,' I suppose."

"Oh, Daddy, I should love²³⁶ to do it. I should feel so capable, and I should try so hard to get a good place for all the nice girls! There are many calls for substitutes in summer, you

²³² Break between Pages 105 & 106.

²³³ Break between Pages 106 & 107.

²³⁴ "Of all" is written incorrectly as "also."

²³⁵ "Celerity" means "speed."

²³⁶ "I should love" is written "I-SH-D-R-V." It should be "I-SH-D-L-V."

know. Sometimes a position is really important. Mr. French says his brother has a fine position with the railroad **company** that began with his being substitute stenographer. And²³⁷ think of it, Helena! If Miss Wheelock ever does have to send for a typist or any kind of secretary, whom do you think I should consider the most suitable and appropriate?"

However, it was not through Natalie growing rosy and contented in her small niche that Helena's good luck finally came.

Dr. Gray was sent for one morning and came back an hour later with a grave face.

"In this extremity,²³⁸ Miss Wheelock will be glad to see you, Helena, my child," he said. "Whether you will be glad [to] be with her—

"You can help her. I have talked to her plainly. She has apparently gone all her life on the principle that she was clever and strong enough to do everything for herself, and she will have a complete nervous breakdown if she can't be made to see that everyone needs help in this world of ours. She needs a stenographer and typist of some versatility, for it is true that she has contracted for more work than one pair of hands can do. I do not speak of the limitations of the brain, for I don't know that there are any!

"She also needs a good, sensible young woman, who has the capacity and tact to teach her how to be young herself—the woman isn't 30 yet!

"What you can learn from her is your affair. She asked nothing about your record at the **Tiptap** office (Mr. French says it is a good one), but whether you had²³⁹ a pleasant disposition and an even temper! You will need them, my girl, for she certainly is erratic; but now's your chance at a live author!"

"Is it a secretary that's needed or an animal-trainer?" Henry had the temerity²⁴⁰ to inquire. "Is Nell to copy her fantastic tales, or is she hired to convert her to Christianity?"

"All my good work at the **Tiptap** wasted!" mourned Natalie when she heard the news. "Mr. French says he doesn't like to send anyone out afternoons²⁴¹ until he has consulted me to see if I think they are suitable. I was so sure Miss Wheelock would come to us if she needed help, and then I'd send Helena."

"Oh, no, your good work isn't being wasted!" Henry retorted, at which Natalie unaccountably blushed.

²³⁷ Break between Pages 107 & 108.

²³⁸ "Extremity" appears in the 1916 Gregg Shorthand Manual on Page 127.

²³⁹ Break between Pages 108 & 109.

²⁴⁰ "Temerity" means "rash boldness."

²⁴¹ Natalie, the employment specialist, works only in the mornings.

Clay Emmet was talking with his father on the subject of the summer vacation; that is Clay had taken up the matter on the present occasion, and his father was doing the listening.

"Do you mean to say," the older man finally asked, in the same manner he used in cross examination, "you want [to] spend your time [helping]²⁴² your friend pass out application blanks for the insurance company?"

"I will get a job of my own some time or other," said Clay, who had been doing his best to tell the merits of the case, "but you say you want me to spend the summer outdoors as much as possible. I am aware of the fact that you would like me to go boarding somewhere, same as a year ago, but this would cost less. I'd have to have the room anyway, and Dean need only pay for his meals, so it would cost him less, and we could both be working and having the time of our lives for a few weeks at least.

"This fall, I would like to write for the legal department of some big company in the city of Chicago as stenographer. I know I can get a job. As a matter of fact, stenography usually leads to whatever a fellow likes sooner or later.

"I wanted [to] be sure at as early a date as possible that²⁴³ you will let us take the car next week."

This speech was a hard one for Clay, and was received in such a manner as to give him little or no encouragement, but the lad was determined to do himself and Dean a good turn at the same time if possible. He stood somewhat in awe of his dignified father, but Clay had his own idea of dignity, too, and meant to have his answer.

"I thought I could put one or two of Lassie's puppies in the car. I would like to see the people who are going to buy them, of course. We want to know that they'll have good homes. They are good dogs, Dad, and ought to bring a fair price, but I could make it as low as possible if I am in a position to know it will be a good home for the pup. I know it is a good deal to ask—let us take the car."

"I will just call your attention to the fact that it is a new car," said Emmet, Sr. "I should be sorry to hear of your driving it around in such a condition as I saw Dean's borrowed flivver²⁴⁴ on Clinton Avenue a few hours ago. If I furnish the car, you will be the driver as a matter of course?"

"You may be sure that I'll be chauffeur as far as possible²⁴⁵," said Clay. "We'll want [to] go slow in order to see what the prospects are before we get out to try to sell insurance or a puppy. We wouldn't go so far from home, only Dean canvassed the country around here over and over again a year or 2 ago when he was²⁴⁶ selling electrical appliances, and he went over the magazine field at the same time."

²⁴² The word "helping" was omitted in error. That is not a word that should be omitted and inferred by the context of the sentence, such as the word "to" or "an."

²⁴³ Break between Pages 110 & 111.

²⁴⁴ "Flivver" is archaic for a cheap car in bad condition.

²⁴⁵ "As far as possible" is written "S-F-S-P" in a single phrase.

²⁴⁶ Break between Pages 111 & 112.

"Magazines?" The lawyer's face lighted with its rare smile. "Besides insurance and puppies?"

"Oh Dean always has the magazines in his mind," answered his son. "It is the insurance that he is really going after. You know the insurance company always sends an experienced man with a green one, but they are making an exception in this case on account of the fact that there'll be two of us anyway, and Dean worked for the same man when he was with the express company. The magazines and puppies are on the side. Thank you, Dad."

A week later, the two friends set out in the best of spirits, going westward until they reached the first town which Dean had not penetrated the past year. The insurance business was not so good as they had hoped; so many people were already policy holders. In point of fact, it was Clay, untrained as he was, who succeeded in talking endowment policy so convincingly that their first application blank was forwarded by early mail.²⁴⁷

In the matter of magazines, Dean was filling out order blanks as fast as possible. He possessed the art of approaching a householder in such a way as to make a friend, often in a few minutes' chat. Then Dean never forgot a face; his customers were always his friends. Nothing daunted him.

A particularly grim specimen, who had answered little or nothing to his impassioned argument and tactful²⁴⁸ suggestions up to the time of his actually pausing for further inspiration, asked flatly, "Have you read all them papers yourself that you want me to start reading as soon as possible?"

"No, Madam,"²⁴⁹ answered Dean, whose literary associations were mostly with the sports section of the Sunday papers. "But, if I had read these valuable and instructive magazines, I bet I wouldn't have to be doing this for a living!" Dean was soon "thanking you for your order."

There were first-class homes for puppies, too, and Clay had disposed of all but one to his satisfaction—and he was super-critical—and when for the last time, they encountered a man whose reckless driving had attracted their attention the first time they had seen him.²⁵⁰ They had encountered him again and again. He seemed [to be] driving aimlessly about the same section of the state. On one occasion, he had actually pushed Clay off the road, the latter retreating to an adjacent field and letting the encroacher whiz by with a taunting²⁵¹ blast.

Dean was indignant.

"I'd have held my ground and let him come," he declared wrathfully. "What business had he coming down a hill on the wrong side of the road, anyway! He ought to get²⁵² smashed!"

"Not by my head—it is not hard enough," said Clay good humoredly. "My head is still useful to me, and this is Dad's car, borrowed with the understanding that I am to return it in as good

²⁴⁷ "By early mail" is a phrase on Page 134 of the 1916 Gregg Shorthand Manual.

²⁴⁸ Break between Pages 112 & 113.

²⁴⁹ "Madam" is written "N-DEM." It should be "M-DEM."

²⁵⁰ This is a poorly written sentence.

²⁵¹ "Taunting" is written "T-NT-ING." It should be "T-O-NT-ING."

²⁵² The phrase "ought to get" did not print properly. The middle part is missing.

condition as it was given to me. Up to the present time,²⁵³ I've given that fact due attention. Now I am of the opinion that it would be [well]²⁵⁴ for me²⁵⁵ to return with my head in such a condition that I can use it again sometime, as well as the car!"

Dean said no more on that subject for the time being. It was a well-known fact that Clay was a better driver.

Some days later, they saw the man again. They had nicknamed him **Squaretop** in reference [to] a cap of pale blue and dark green, so designed that the lighter color formed a large square on top and gave the effect of a four-cornered cap, instead of the customary round one. On this occasion, the boys were fortunate to be spectators only.

They had just descended a long hill—it was not steep, but on a curve, and Clay had come down with even more than his usual care because the bottom of the hill was not in sight from the top. Dean was holding the last little puppy in his arms and had said, "Slow down still more, will you, Clay, until I get this mischievous fellow back into his box," and Clay ran a short distance on the level ground, drew up well to the side of the road, and came to a stop. Dean turned toward the rear seat to settle the uneasy pup and was therefore looking back toward the hill.

"Here' a good partner for Squaretop," said Clay, as a cloud of dust came²⁵⁶ into his view, and he watched it anxiously, while Dean continued to let his idle gaze roam from the puppy to the hill they had just descended.

"He can't help missing us, as they say, unless he goes out of his way, we're so far over; but if he meets anybody on the hill—"

The big machine passed the boys without swerving from its path. It had kept the right of way, making the grade, when it came to the rise with no slackening of speed. Clay turned back to watch the hill with Dean, when to their horror, another car made its appearance on the road, coming suddenly into their vision from around the treacherous curve, and bearing downhill at a rate the boys could easily imagine—well over toward its driver's left, the wrong side of the road!

"One of them will have to turn out mighty quick," said Clay tensely. "If they are both like Squaretop—"

Neither driver yielded the road, whether from obstinacy, as the man going up was on his own side, and the man coming down had simply taken the wider curve, almost inevitable at the rate he was going, or whether from panic or lack of time, will never be known. There could be but one result. Dean covered his eyes, and the puppy whined in sympathy.

"We must help," said Clay, promptly turning his own car around and starting for the hill.²⁵⁷

"Oh, Dean, it was Squaretop coming down!" he breathed, as they came nearer the wrecked machines.

²⁵³ Break between Pages 113 & 114.

²⁵⁴ The word "well" is usually not omitted in shorthand. That word is not typically inferred from the context.

²⁵⁵ "For me" is written "F-M-E."

²⁵⁶ Break between Pages 114 & 115.

²⁵⁷ Break between Pages 115 & 116.

"Don't look if you're at all squeamish," Clay hastened to warn his chum. "One of us ought to stay here, and the other go for help. I'll stay here, Dean, and you take the car and go back to the nearest house."

An hour later, the two lads resumed their way in [a] sober mood. An ambulance passed them on its way from the nearby town; that was for the unknown man. Squaretop, whom they felt to be almost like an acquaintance, although he had been anything but friendly, was beyond the care of hospitals.

"It's no use," said Dean at length. "You will be sorry you came with me, Clay, or rather took me with you. I can't help thinking—suppose I had been driving instead of you the other day when we met Squaretop—when we met him, and you went way over into the field to get out of his way. I don't like [to] give in to the other fellow when I'm right, and if I had had my cousin's old flivver, I wouldn't have given that a thought. And suppose Square—suppose he wouldn't turn out for me any more than he did for—"

"Forget it," Clay spoke in a matter-of-fact voice, but with a glance at the other's white face, he added, "Let's drive in here and rest a while if they will let us. Perhaps we can sell²⁵⁸ the pup; it looks like a good home for our youngest!"

"We are sure to be called as witnesses—that is only a question of time," said Dean, following his own line of thought.

"We have been witnesses once at least up to date, and it didn't kill us," Clay responded briskly. "I wonder what did become of Sidney Blair, anyhow; he's been on my mind for the past week."

They were now entering a pretentious²⁵⁹ driveway, and he stopped the car, got out, and rapped at a side door. He soon returned to the car and took the now sleeping puppy into his arms.

"The lady of the house is certainly treating us in a first-class manner," he reported. "She has a son in the claim department of the telephone company on Washington Avenue,²⁶⁰ name of Robert Hillis; we know him. He's home sick this week. She wants [to] look at the pup, and she wants us to stay to supper. Drive the car round back. The hired man will show you."

Dean did as requested and soon located "the hired man," a silent individual with a heavy beard.

"He looks like—who?—besides one of the Coughdrop Smith Brothers?" thought Dean, eying him keenly. "He doesn't like my looks any better than I do his—or else he's afraid of me."

"Why—what!" Dean would have been a surprised youth had anyone told him his powers of

²⁵⁸ Break between Pages 116 & 117.

²⁵⁹ "Pretentious" is missing "OO-S" at the end.

²⁶⁰ The concept that uses an "A" following an Avenue name is used in Gregg Shorthand Manual for "Washington Avenue." But the abbreviation for "Washington" by itself is not introduced until Lesson 20 of the Manual.

observation²⁶¹ were exceptionally keen. He had no idea that the recognition of a face he had once known under any or all circumstances was in any way remarkable. He only knew that this man, who was motioning him where to park, was Sidney Blair, for whom everyone, he read [in] the Associated Press, had been searching.

In such [a] case, had he been in his happy-go-lucky state of mind, Dean would have blurted out his knowledge with the least possible delay. But his confidence in his own judgment had been badly shaken. On account of the way Clay had conducted himself in their first serious experience together, Dean decided to consult him in this new situation in order to be able to do the right thing. He therefore gave no sign of recognition to Sidney Blair, but went quietly into the house and awaited an opportunity to confide in Clay alone. This did not come until they were leaving the house together, having declined a courteous invitation to spend the night there.

"Should we have stayed so that we could put Bob Hillis wise? He ought to know first in order to prepare his mother and sisters. But what could Bob do? He is in such a condition, he ought not be worried really."

Clay paused. His ready speech and fun-loving ways somewhat belied his really judicial temperament.

"No, I am not sorry we got out, knowing this about Blair," he thought aloud. "The Hillis automobile in the barn is a high-powered one, and no doubt, the 'hired²⁶² man' is also chauffeur and could make his getaway and disappear from the face of the earth if he suspected us of giving the show away. Whatever caused his disappearance in the first place is still in force, or he wouldn't be hiding here."

"Hiding behind his whiskers, for example," murmured Dean, much encouraged by hearing that his chum approved his course.

"Blair must be made to come back," said Clay decidedly, "but our only chance, before arranging that something strenuous be done, is in letting him think he is safe. If Mrs. Hillis knew his history, she couldn't help wishing that he would take himself off and showing it perhaps; or maybe she would be afraid of him. The whole family like [sic] him now; he has been doing their gardening and making himself useful in many ways. But he must be made to come back to the Ridge and explain a few things—that we know!"

"We will have [to] stay around the neighborhood a while anyway," said Dean. "There will be enough business to keep us going for a few days one way or another."

"I don't like accepting this responsibility about Blair though," Clay resumed thoughtfully. "Suppose we transfer it to older and wiser heads than ours."

"We will send a carefully worded telegram to Deacon Tenney and then a letter. He can do as he likes about coming and getting Blair—or sending for him.²⁶³ It is too big for us to handle, Dean."

²⁶¹ Break between Pages 117 & 118.

²⁶² Break between Pages 118 & 119.

²⁶³ Break between Pages 119 & 120.

"That's what we will do!" Dean declared with profound relief. "We will put it up to the Deacon!"²⁶⁴

²⁶⁴ "Put it up to the Deacon" means that they will tell the Deacon and let him decide what to do.

Aunt Freedom had been making a visit of unusual length in Florida when the Blair-Oliver trouble came to its favorable conclusion, and she was now hearing for the twentieth time its various developments and extensive results. She never failed to corroborate by an earnest nod of approval her brother's benevolent remark that the younger generation had shown themselves both versatile and persevering. He had abundant praise for the discernment shown by Clay and Dean in an emergency when they had counted so confidently upon his help—conclusive evidence of good sense!

"I was in Springfield when Clay's letter and telegram came," he began anew, as they proceeded to Dr. Gray's residence one beautiful June evening.

Aunt Freedom surprised him by interrupting: "Do you not apprehend some difficulty in bestowing but one prize among them all? It appears as though they could all qualify, each in his own situation," she reasoned anxiously.

The Deacon smiled benignantly.²⁶⁵ "You don't really know what the prize is for any more than the children themselves do. There will be no dissatisfaction with my assignment when I read aloud the cards they prepared for me²⁶⁶ approximately 2 years ago," he volunteered. "Their envelopes have never been opened. I never intended to read them until their introduction into this special Club meeting," he added casually with a smile incomprehensible to his curious companion.

"Before 8:00, Sister Freedom, the whole congregation shall know who best fulfills my conditions."

* * * * *

"A year from the date of our graduation, we shall have a circle meeting at which he wishes to preside!"

What a remote contingency it had sounded when Nan told them that September day she acted as messenger for her uncle, the Deacon!

He had wanted them to choose a vocation, instead of drifting aimlessly along with no specific goal, and he had promised to remunerate one of them by a week's holiday in Washington.

Now the time was up, and obedient to Dr. Gray's cordial suggestion of his house as headquarters for their June meeting, the eight Raleigh Rainbows had gathered together from Boston, New York, and points nearer their little home town of Raleigh Ridge. In looking back, the very year from graduation, which had once seemed ample time in which to establish themselves now seemed all too short. Each felt uneasily that the comparatively brief duration of time in which to show results was a practical disadvantage!

"I hope we can make our June meeting an annual institution, like any alumni association," said Dick to Nan, as she preceded him²⁶⁷ up the familiar path to the Gray homestead. "But

²⁶⁵ "Benignantly" means "kindly" or "graciously."

²⁶⁶ Break between Pages 121 & 122.

²⁶⁷ Break between Pages 122 & 123.

there will never be another meeting as exciting as this!" she answered thoughtfully. "Our testimonial meeting, Dick!"

They were the last to enter the big, informal study, which also served as living room for the doctor's household. An unusual assemblage met their eyes. The Deacon had constituted²⁶⁸ himself Master of Ceremonies to the extent of inviting an outsider whom he knew to be in sympathy for each one of the octette, and Dean's mother, Clay's father, Dick's aunt, and Amy's father, with Dr. and Mrs. Gray, the Deacon himself, and Aunt Freedom, made a conspicuous addition to the expected company.

"I have no authoritative²⁶⁹ information as to modern procedure on such occasions as the present," began the redoubtable Deacon, as he designated seats for the last comers. "It seems expedient to me to read your testimony as I find it on these enclosures, to let the deponent²⁷⁰ subscribe to its authenticity, and then tell us how his ambition has developed. I am aware that you have hitherto worked in ignorance of the one quality I have meant to promulgate,²⁷¹ but the verdict will be a righteous one, I warrant you."²⁷²

Forthwith, the Deacon, being²⁷³ nothing if not executive,²⁷⁴ withdrew his hand from the manuscript²⁷⁵ case he carried and produced a sealed envelope, which he opened carefully, reading from the card therein: "My ambition is to surprise Uncle²⁷⁶ Nat by becoming a good business woman."

The Deacon did bear every appearance of surprise, and there being but one member who could address him as "uncle," all eyes turned toward Nan.

"I couldn't very well refuse to admit that I wrote it," said the young woman, getting quickly to her feet. "Likewise that I meant it just that way at the time. Today the wind sits in another quarter, as our nautical friend Dick would say. I am under great obligations to the aforesaid uncle for his support in my present venture!

"As you all know, I have had a variety of positions this last year. I have made my hieroglyphics and read and typed them, too, for the head of a chemical laboratory, an attorney at law, a newspaper agency, an architect, and a wholesale plumbers' supplies representative, all with [a] view to acquiring a wide vocabulary and a varied experience in practical work.

"Now Uncle Nat is to open a branch office in the city, and I am to have office room with him and to reciprocate by answering the telephone and so on when he is not there. I am to have my own sign on the door—'public stenographer,' if you please! I foresee a long struggle before I can count on a steady income, but that is unavoidable in starting any business for oneself, Uncle Nat says. I am only too thankful for the opportunity with no steady²⁷⁷ overhead expense!

²⁶⁸ "Constituted" means "appointed to an office."

²⁶⁹ "Authoritative" means "substantiated."

²⁷⁰ In this context, "deponent" means "the person who wrote the statement."

²⁷¹ "Promulgate" means "formally proclaim."

²⁷² Deacon uses a lot of legal language in this paragraph.

²⁷³ "Being" is missing the dot designating "ing."

²⁷⁴ In this context, "executive" means "function of carrying out plans."

²⁷⁵ "Manuscript" appears on Page 151 of the 1916 Gregg Shorthand Manual.

²⁷⁶ Break between Pages 123 & 124.

²⁷⁷ Break between Pages 124 & 125.

"As for my card written a year ago last September, I wish Uncle Nat would tear it up. I shall never surprise anybody, for you see, I have had help all the way. Natalie and her friend Mr. French have been finding me employers in need of temporary help all winter; and now it is Uncle Nat who will help me carry on a little more expansive undertaking.

"I ought to have written 'Help! Help!' on my card, instead of what I did!"

"Nan, you are not fair to yourself," said her friend Natalie warmly. "Not a word about Mr. Oliver and all you've done."

The Deacon coughed her to silence. "Nancy has done very well," he said. "Perhaps we have surprised each other."

"The next envelope"—he opened it and read: "'a secretaryship to some big man.'"

Henry Gray stood up. "Miss Remington wrote to my father last summer, and Mr. Hobart Remington met Dad in New York, and they had a regular powwow. Result: I am now something of a secretary, something of a courier, and something of an errand boy to the Remingtons, and don't I like it!²⁷⁸ We are on the move constantly. Last winter, I saw New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, of course; then²⁷⁹ Newark and other eastern cities. Next winter, our itinerary reads: Baltimore, Pittsburg, Buffalo, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, and possibly some cities farther west."

"Whew," said Dick, but the Deacon tranquilly proceeded to the next: "'I want [to] go to college.'"

"I am going," said Amy.

"And that's that," corroborated Nan, half enviously, but her uncle was ready with another: "'I'd like [to] make my father proud of me.'"

There were inquiring looks until Natalie blushinglly arouse from her place.

"Well, well," said the good doctor, who appeared much pleased. "I am proud of you—always have been.

"But I have respected my daughter as a woman, ever since she went into the Tiptap Typewriter office last summer and took their examination and found a position for herself without asking or even telling us about it until she had succeeded. That showed initiative, which is indispensable. The fact that she started,²⁸⁰ I believe, a naturally diffident²⁸¹ and reserved young lady with the hope of getting some information that might help her cousin—that showed character. I am proud of my girl."

Helena waived her handkerchief at Natalie and found herself next in line as the Deacon read: "'To write stories that will make people happier and better.'"

²⁷⁸ The question mark appearing before the exclamation point in "don't I like it?!" was probably written into the shorthand in error.

²⁷⁹ Break between Pages 125 & 126.

²⁸⁰ "Started" is written "S-T-A-TED." It should be "S-T-A-disjoined T."

²⁸¹ "Diffident" means "shy or lacking confidence."

"It sounds priggish read out like that," said Helena frankly. "I²⁸² still long to do original work, but in the meantime, I am glad of the chance to work for an author, and I learn all I can."

"How does one get a story published?" asked Nan irrepressibly.²⁸³

"Type it, keeping a carbon copy, and send it to the magazine that seems most suitable with an addressed and stamped envelope for its return," said Helena briefly. "If the magazine people want it, they keep it and send you a check. If they don't, they send it back to you, and you mail it to another magazine."

"There is no trick in it, no red tape, no personal correspondence, unless the editor of the magazine begins it; nothing is needed but a story and stamps for postage both ways. One editor will like what 20 did not care for at all, so you mustn't be discouraged. You simply do the best you can, and if that isn't good enough, you must learn to do better."

"Do real authors ever get anything returned?"

Helena's eyes danced, but she answered only, "It is not impossible."

"On the next card," continued the indefatigable Deacon: "I'd like to know lots of people and talk to them."

"That's me," Dean admitted. "You couldn't call it an ambition, could you?"

"It's an enormous asset," said Dr. Gray earnestly.

"Brother says the lad's a born salesman. He inherited that from his father, who was also a good citizen,²⁸⁴ as Dean will be," said Aunt Freedom quickly on the defensive for one of her favorites.

"It was Dean who recognized Sidney Blair," Clay reminded them. "I should have passed the man without a thought a dozen times in my stupidity."

"But it was the Deacon who prevailed upon Blair to return to the Ridge," Dean interrupted.

"Let's finish the business in hand," suggested Nan, who kept a wary eye upon her uncle and feared an instantaneous explosion. "Dean's alright, and he can come to me to get his business letters written when he is on the road."

"Not much! What do you think I learned to typewrite for—to pay out all my money to public stenographers?" asked the economical salesman. "Go on please, Deacon Tenney. Where is Clay's card?"

"A lawyer like my father," read the Deacon promptly.

"That's right. That is what I want to be," said Clay.

²⁸² Break between Pages 126 & 127.

²⁸³ "Irrepressibly" means "unrestrained." It is written "E-R-E-P-R-E-S." It should be "E-R-P-R-E-S."

²⁸⁴ Break between Pages 127 & 128.

"A better one." Clay Emmet, Sr., spoke shortly, and even his son could not know what that boyish ambition meant to the somewhat arbitrary²⁸⁵ man. "I didn't approve much of the stenography at first for my lad," he vouchsafed.²⁸⁶ "Now I see he will always find it useful. Wish I knew it myself."

"Last of all," the Deacon concluded: "I mean to work for a rich man and get rich myself."

"Oh, Dick!"²⁸⁷ It was Nan who exclaimed, while the others stared.

"You have all revolutionized your lives to fulfill your ambitions," said Dick with a smile, which provoked the curious to wonder.

"I will have to be the exception that proves the rules. I didn't stay with my wealthy man long enough to illustrate my doctrine that the success of a clerk should coincide with that of his chief!

"I will make affidavit for the credit of the Raleigh Rainbows that I was not discharged for any misdemeanor or negligence. I handed in my resignation. Instead of sharing the glory and the dividends of my luxury-loving and cosmopolitan millionaire—he had his good points!—here I am stenographer and general factotum²⁸⁸ for Mr. Leopold Oliver, who is nearly bankrupt!

"I am satisfied, too, and refuse to consider my land-slide a disaster. However, as defendant in this case—you all acting as plaintiffs, I suppose—I will admit I haven't a leg to stand on. I can't defend myself. I suppose you might say I lose by default."

Deacon Tenney checked²⁸⁹ the first incoherent questions, which arouse on all sides by his violent thumps on the desk with a foot rule,²⁹⁰ the club equivalent to a gavel.

"By invitation of our hostess and her husband," he announced dictatorially, "the legislative portion of this assemblage, which is under my jurisdiction,²⁹¹ will retire to Dr. Gray's office to carry out my program, namely: "To discover and vote for the prize winner."²⁹²

"The election can have but one outcome when my logic is before the legislature.

"While we execute justice, a social hour is in order for the members."

Nan gave an undisguised sigh of relief as the door closed.

"Were any of you thinking [of] my silly class prophecy during these last few minutes?" she asked.

"I was," answered Helena. "My 'career' isn't as far away from me as it seemed that day; I can

²⁸⁵ "Arbitrary" is written "A-R-B-T-R-A". It should be "A-R-B." It means "subject to personal whims."

²⁸⁶ "Vouchsafed" means "condescended."

²⁸⁷ Break between Pages 128 & 129.

²⁸⁸ "Factotum" means "general assistant."

²⁸⁹ In this context, "checked" means "suppressed."

²⁹⁰ "Foot rule" is "a foot long ruler."

²⁹¹ Break between Pages 129 & 130.

²⁹² "Discover" makes no sense in this sentence.

safely say that much."

"While Natalie is still a daughter and a sister," smiled her brother. "As for me, I think I proved myself a specimen—of a dumb waiter—while I was waiting for Father in Boston on a certain day and showing off the town to a lady who was attending symphony concerts and had been for years while I was a pup!"

"Dean and I are still out of jail—that shows you have the true gift of prophecy, Nan," Clay asserted. Let's see; that leaves Amy and Dick."

"I wonder if Amy would like [to] travel sometime," Henry suggested.

"Why it is my dream!" cried Amy impulsively and then began to look very much²⁹³ as though she wished she'd kept silent.

"Don't forget that I am due to keep old maid's hall²⁹⁴ myself," laughed Nan, drawing the attention of the others from Amy. "I will have six cats, a poodle, a parrot, and a bowl of goldfish, and it will be my life work to keep them apart. That leaves only Dick to be accounted for.

"Now I'll tell you all about Dick, since he won't," she volunteered. "I was disappointed when his card was read, but you'll all admit he's made ample atonement for it.

"Dick had a wonderful position, but he was deceived in his employer. When he found out what kind of man his millionaire was, he wouldn't work for him. His salary was so big, it did seem disproportionate to his services, until he discovered he was really being paid to act as agent in—some very questionable practices to say the least.

"The man has been smart enough to avoid litigation, but as Dick says, he is all the more dangerous on that account, and Dick has decided he doesn't care to get rich in that way.

"By accident he found that Mr. Oliver needed a young man, so he made application and was accepted. The pay doesn't amount to so much right now, but people don't persecute or ignore Mr. Oliver since Sidney Blair came back, and there's quite²⁹⁵ a bit of responsibility. I warrant Dick has a chance to rise and will not remain [a] subaltern²⁹⁶ very long."

"It's all in the yeast," murmured Dean, while Dick himself much embarrassed managed to stammer, "You ought to write obituaries for tombstones, Nan, or whatever they call that kind of publicity work. I am not sure your imagination isn't working overtime. You know it did once," he added significantly.

"What secret are you two up to now?" inquired Clay curiously. "I've thought there was something ever since that day we didn't have the bacon-bat on Raleigh Heights."

"The day they began hunting for Sidney Blair," Nan amended. "Dick means that I was once foolish enough to think Mr. Oliver had something to do with his partner's disappearance."

²⁹³ Break between pages 130 & 131.

²⁹⁴ "Keep old maid's hall" means to keep house without the presence of a man.

²⁹⁵ Break between Pages 131 & 132.

²⁹⁶ "Subaltern" means "low-ranking."

"Hadn't he?"

Natalie Gray stared at Amy, who had asked the question and then repaid her brother for a good deal of teasing by observing, "Why, Amy, I thought by the length of the letter Henry was writing you when he was home last Christmas, he must surely be keeping you posted on everything that happened at the Ridge!"

"You'd better let Helena tell the Blair-Oliver story to Amy, if she hasn't heard it," said Henry with dignity. "She tells better stories than you do, my dear sister, though not bigger ones."

"Go on, Nell," said Natalie, ignoring him.²⁹⁷

"Once upon a time," began Helena obediently, "a man named Sidney Blair was very much afraid of going to states prison for murder; but he didn't have to go because he had such a good alibi. He was tried and acquitted. Another man went behind the iron bars, a man innocent of that crime, but a man of bad reputation. It was not murder in the first degree—there were extenuating circumstances, but the innocent man served 20 years for it. Mr. Blair moved to another part of the United States, to Raleigh Ridge, as you know.

"When the 20 years were nearly up, Blair became very nervous and felt that his own life would be in danger when Johnston, the innocent man, got out of prison. His business affairs here were demoralized, and disaster threatened him; so he went to New York City to arrange to leave the country, intending to send for his family later on.

"What he didn't count on was the time Johnston got off for good behavior. He was very well behaved in prison it seems, for he was out and after Sidney Blair long before the time was up. He easily traced Blair to the Ridge, and thence to New York. Someone warned Blair, who became frightened and wrote to Mr. Oliver—a letter which made much trouble. You see, Blair had communicated with his folks by that time, and they had opened the letter and read it themselves and told him²⁹⁸ what was in it. They denied this afterwards when they saw where the admission would lead them. Blair had asked for a meeting on the Heights, as we know, intending to throw himself on his partner's mercy.

"You know Mr. Oliver is exceptionally kind-hearted."

"Yes," groaned Nan and Dick together, "We do!"

"Blair came back from New York in his big, blue car, met Mr. Oliver halfway down from the Heights, took him in, and started up again."

"That's when we first saw the blue car," said Dick.

"They had their talk on the Heights," Helena continued, "and it was a very exciting one, for Blair even threatened suicide, I believe, and poor Mr. Oliver had to treat him almost like a crazy man, he says. He admits that when he came down to the Ridge, he was nearly crazy himself, but the two men had made it up between them that Blair was to go on and lose himself in some remote state and see what developed."

"Leaving Oliver to administer the business, thwart the villain, and explain operations as best

²⁹⁷ Break between Pages 132 & 133.

²⁹⁸ Break between Pages 133 & 134.

he could to the universe at large," Dick specified indignantly. "Quite a price to pay for one ride to the top of the Heights, even in Blair's luxurious automobile!"

"It does seem exorbitant," smiled Helena. "I was never partial to Mr. Blair, and I think²⁹⁹ in the case of Johnston vs. Blair, to know the whole history of both men better than we do would be indispensable to a fair judgment. Perhaps Mr. Oliver was deceived as to its merits.

"To resume: I think Blair's position was strengthened by the hope that Johnston might do something to get into trouble with the police and get put away again."

"But Mr. Oliver ought not to enter into a covenant to help a murderer get away, even if he were attached to him, as he must have been to Mr. Blair!" Little Amy's face was horror-stricken.

"There were extenuating circumstances, as I said, whoever was guilty," answered Helena gravely. Leopold Oliver at least held his tongue through it all, and Blair counted upon that. The blue automobile was sold, of course, and the owner turned tramp, he says, then took a job or two as farmhand or laborer, and finally established himself with the Hillis family, where Dean saw and recognized him."

"Your turn, Dean," said Clay.

"Well, I knew him right off," said Dean readily. "I told Clay, and he said to wire the Deacon, so we did. But we had a narrow squeak.

"Whether Blair caught on that I had recognized him or whether he thought it time for him to move on anyway, we don't know. He had his things³⁰⁰ all packed, ready to leave [the] next day with the brown paper parcel he brought them in, when he heard Clay and me talking in the barn about a man we had seen killed the day before."

Dean shuddered.

"The man was a stranger to us in a way," Clay continued to help him out. "It was a man we had noticed on the road, though, the last few days; we had been obliged to notice him, for he was such a crazy driver, he had us almost climbing a telegraph pole to get out of his way. In time, he got caught himself, and—well—he was killed in an automobile accident.

"Blair heard Dean and me talking about him, and we called him 'Squaretop.' Up jumps this hired man, who was really Blair, you know, and wanted to know all about him, what he looked like, why we called him Squaretop, and so on.

"To make a long story short," Clay ended quickly, "our Mr. Squaretop was really Mr. Johnston. I wish you could have seen his cap, but I won't describe it now. With him out of the way—he was killed instantly, the coroner said—Blair was perfectly willing to come back with us, so our whole delegation returned. That made things alright for Mr. Oliver."

"Johnston³⁰¹ had worn the same cap when Blair caught sight of him in New York," Dean explained. "Just think, he had followed Blair all the way to within a few miles of where we

²⁹⁹ Break between Pages 134 & 135.

³⁰⁰ Break between Pages 135 & 136.

³⁰¹ Break between Pages 136 & 137.

found him and then lost the trail. He was scouring the country round about when we used to meet him and wonder why he didn't seem to have any special route. Sometimes he'd pass us going the same way."

"It is a good thing for Blair that Johnston was a reckless driver," said Clay.

"Mr. Blair took his family and moved to Toronto—Henry did write about that," Amy told them innocently. "I suppose he couldn't face the disgrace, and no wonder.

"But, Nan, how could you think Mr. Oliver would ever do anything, but what was kind and good? He's almost too kind-hearted, isn't he? Couldn't he have persuaded people that Mr. Blair had gone away of his own accord and make things easier for himself?"

"Not without telling a great deal too much about Mr. Blair," Nan answered, "and there were Mr. Blair's wife and family to be thought of.

"Mr. Oliver is nearly alone in the world—there is only a family of distant cousins connected with him at all—and he thought a great deal of Blair's family. He felt that all he had to do was bear with³⁰² patience whatever interpretation ignorant people might put upon the circumstances. He involved no one else when he let people blame him.

"The two partners both came from some little town in the northwestern part of England; perhaps the fact that they were both English made a bond between them."

"We know how kind-hearted Mr. Oliver was upon one occasion, don't we, Nan?" Dick laughed and told them of the time they had followed the unsuspecting man to Bennett's Landing and of the parcel he carried.

"You see," he finished, "up to that time, Nan really believed—"

"What?"

"Why that Mr. Oliver knew more about the disappearance of Blair than he really ought to," said Nan.

"Nan had a good reason," Dick apologized.

"You remember we all saw the blue automobile, which we rightly took to be Blair's going up towards the Heights on that memorable day? The question was: Was Blair, Oliver, or both in that car?

"A short time afterwards, Nan and I happened to see Mr. Oliver coming down from the Heights, behaving in a suspicious manner to say the least. As we know now, he had been literally fighting with poor, distracted Blair to keep the man from doing himself bodily injury.

"Of course Nan and I put another interpretation upon Oliver's being there at that time and upon his crazy actions. The fact that no one knew it but ourselves, and³⁰³ Nan's sensitive conscience, which made her wonder if it were right for us to keep silent, gave us both some anxious minutes, I assure you."

³⁰² Break between Pages 137 & 138.

³⁰³ Break between Pages 138 & 139.

"But the testimony showed that Oliver was right in the center of the town Raleigh Ridge at 6:00," said Clay defensively.

"Sure," said Dean. "Didn't we all tell the detectives that it was not much before a quarter to 6:00 when we saw Blair's machine going up the road to the Heights? How could Mr. Oliver have been with Blair at that time and been passing the town hall at 6:00? He must have made it in two jumps, same as the crazy man said he could get out of any window in the asylum!"

"That has puzzled all of us," Dick said. "We couldn't tell to a minute when we saw Blair's car, and we didn't know whether there was a possibility he might have done it somehow.

"We didn't dare to tell people we had seen him coming down all alone, Nan and I, after having seen Blair's car go up. We were afraid there might be some way he could have reached the Ridge at 6:00, and he might be prosecuted or suspected even more in the matter of Blair's disappearance. I don't understand it."

"It still troubles me," said Nan in a worried tone. "Mr. Oliver says it was before 5:00 that he met Blair and helped plan his escape. Fortunately, no one knew³⁰⁴ that at the time, or his having been seen in town at 6:00 would not have helped him any.

"We Raleigh Rainbows testified to seeing Blair's car between half past 5:00 and 6:00, and Mr. Oliver was seen near the town hall at 6:00. How did he do it, unless he went up twice? And then, how did he get down by 6:00?"

"How do you know just what time we saw Mr. Blair?" asked the now deeply interested Amy. "I don't remember³⁰⁵ much about that; perhaps I didn't get as thorough an examination as the rest of you."

"It happened that we all knew the time, because while Nan was hunting for an excuse for not going on all the way up to the Heights as we had planned, she looked at your watch to see what time it was," Henry explained. "It was quarter of 6:00 by your watch, and that was too late for further climbing. None of us had realized it was so late. That's the way we fixed the time, because it was just before that that we had seen the blue automobile."

"My watch?" Amy's voice trembled. "My wrist watch?—Oh, why didn't someone tell me?"

"Amy, don't—what's the matter?" said Nan, giving her arm a vigorous shake. "Your watch didn't make any difference; what did it matter whose watch it was?"

"Nan didn't tell anyone we had seen Mr. Oliver coming down from the³⁰⁶ Heights just before quarter of 6:00, nor did I, I am sure," Dick interposed.³⁰⁷ "Fortunately for us, it was Henry who bore the brunt of the questioning. He testified as to the blue car, of course: that it was a little before quarter of 6:00 that we saw it going up. Mr. Oliver was in no danger, as long as Nan and I held our tongues, for Henry hadn't seen him. You know Henry is careful what he says."

³⁰⁴ Break between Pages 139 & 140.

³⁰⁵ "Much" is written incorrectly as "A-OO-M-CH", which means "how much."

³⁰⁶ Break between Pages 140 & 141.

³⁰⁷ "Interposed" means "interrupted with a remark."

"Then Henry will have to forgive me for making him tell a big fib, in spite of his being so careful," said Amy looking relieved. "My watch was one hour fast! The summer time was off, but I hadn't changed my watch! Father had to remind me of it [the] next day. What a half-awake person I must have been."

"I thought the time went awfully fast!"

"Oh, Amy, you little villain—"

"Never go by a girl's watch, Henry! Your reputation is in danger the minute—"

"That's right; always blame some girl!"

In the babel that ensued, the entrance of Deacon Tenney and the other "legislators" past almost unnoticed—that is until the Deacon could reach his ruler and pound for order.

"You saw me unseal the envelopes you gave me nearly 2 years ago," he began without preamble.³⁰⁸ "Now I will unseal the one I put³⁰⁹ my own affidavit to and sealed at the same time.

"I have told these good people what is in it; now I will read it to you young ones."

The old man's envelope was of imposing legal size. He removed a couple of crisp, new bills and then read from the bit of paper folded about them: "'The trip to Washington is for the one whose idea of success makes the biggest change for the better in the next 22 months'

"Guess you will all agree that the biggest and best change has taken place in the ideas of Mr. Richard Keene, whose first notion was that money was what he wanted most in the world!

"I had some such idea myself when I was his age; but now I can see that money is good only for what it stands for—If it came from a good source and is used for a good purpose, then it is good. You've got to have enough money to lead a good, respectable life yourself and not come to want and be looking for other folks to help you out with what they've earned and saved, while you were making a show with yours! After that, you have got to have something extra to help your fellow creatures to lead good, respectable lives and to put themselves where they can sometimes help their fellow creatures in turn. Misfortune and sickness come to all, and it is a right and a pleasant thing³¹⁰ to help the deserving.

"Such ideas pay enormous dividends. Whenever everybody feels like that, the kingdom of heaven will come right down here on earth, and equality among men will be established.

"I haven't helped it along much myself," admitted the Deacon, dry as ever, in spite of his idealism. "I was prett' far along before I began to realize what I just said in the first place: Money's good for what good it stands for!"

Deacon Tenney, whose manner of expressing himself was not beyond criticism, but who had risen immeasurably in the respect of all his audience, cleared his throat and added: "You

³⁰⁸ "Preamble" means "introduction."

³⁰⁹ Break between Pages 141 & 142.

³¹⁰ Break between Pages 142 & 143.

have all done well, but Richard must have done the most serious thinking, and I am glad to see him get the right ideas before he gets to be my age!"

After the first startled silence, there was a hearty clapping of hands from all but Dick, who rose from his seat, but advanced not a step as the Deacon held out the envelope with the money.

"You're sure this is not a consolation prize, sir?" he demanded.

"Do I look like a man that would hand anybody anything they hadn't earned?" asked the old man, and to tell the truth, he did not.

"I know pretty well the kind of thing you would all put on your paper to show what your ideas were," he said earnestly. "I knew you were all reasonably³¹¹ good young folks, well brought up, and it wouldn't do you any harm to be made to stop and think where you were heading for. I knew there was not much danger, but what you would all head right.

"What I meant was to encourage the one among you who learned the most of real life in a year's experience out of school. I know you will agree with me that it is the one who gave up a good job with a big salary and a chance to make [a] lot on the side—which I know he had every chance to do and no questions asked or fault found.

"Richard gave it all up and started over, contented to help a fellow citizen he knew was a good man in need of young blood and all the encouragement he could get.

"Mind you, it is a fine opening, too," he ended. "Someday, Oliver will be looking for another partner. It will be a long, hard struggle maybe to get the business on its feet and back where it belongs, and he needs our sympathy and support. But Richard has earned a week of real vacation. The money is for him to spend while he is away; I stand by my agreement to pay all necessary expenses."

"There ought to be somebody to take my place to relieve Mr. Oliver of detail work in the office, such as correspondence, reading proofs of his new advertising booklet, etc.," said Dick quietly. "His time³¹² ought to be saved for more important matters."

"I will lend him my own personal stenographer as an accommodation for the week we're gone," said the now smiling Deacon with a hand on Nan's shoulder, as they all gathered around him.

"Her new duties won't begin until I get back, so she might as well fill in the time qualifying in one more kind of business to add to the various ones she's been learning to write letters about."

Nan beamed at him.

* * * * *

³¹¹ Break between Pages 143 & 144.

³¹² Break between Pages 144 & 145.

"But Nan's the only one who didn't go right up and shake Dick by the hand and tell him in so many words what a fine lad he has turned out to be," said the Deacon some hours later, as he and his sister talked over the events of the evening by their own fireside.

Aunt Freedom gave him a pitying smile, as she reached for her knitting.

"I don't know but what our Nancy's improved as much as any of them," the Deacon mused aloud. "She came up to me real pretty when I left her there at the Grays', and she said I might not be up when she came home, so she guessed she'd kiss me goodnight then and there—I was such a sensible, far-seeing man—and she did!"

"Nan is sure happy just now," said gentle Aunt Freedom. "In fact all the young ones are getting along well³¹³ and have their own reasons for being content with their lot. The boys have good prospects, and Natalie has partially arranged to teach in a commercial school, if that Mr. French who comes down to see her every week or two does not thwart her plans.

"Henry is seeing the world, but not forgetting his home people—or Amy Decker.³¹⁴ If I am not mistaken, he is quite willing [to] excuse her for the mistake she made in not changing her watch or for anything else she may do hereafter, if he only gets the chance! Helena will develop her particular talent eventually. In the meantime, her profession of stenography—Yes, Nathan, I call it a profession and a very useful one, a well-paying one, and a step up for any ambitious person!—will prove its worth.

"Your prize offer has been an incentive to strengthening the character of all of them, and I attach great importance to what they have done. As Nan says, you are [a] 'sensible' man, and a 'far-sighted' one, didn't she say? What is in store for our Raleigh Rainbows in the distant future has been of great concern to you, but you are evidently as blind as a bat to what's right under your nose!

"I don't think you need to worry about Nan and Dick, brother!"

³¹³ Break between Pages 145 & 146.

³¹⁴ Her name is "Amy Decker," but "Dexter" is written (D-E-S-T-E).